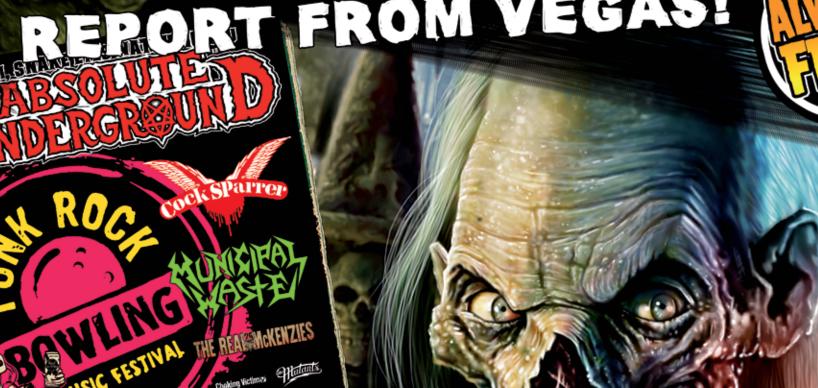


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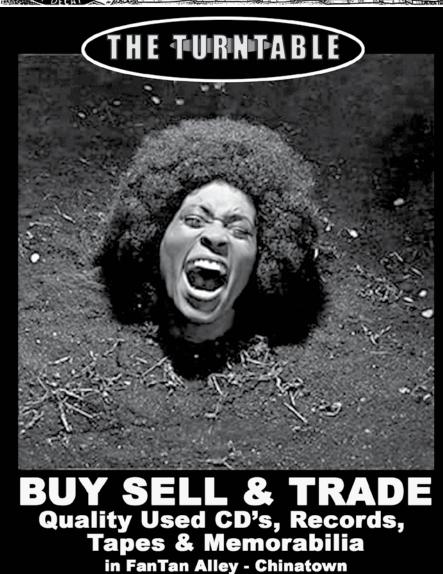
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Absolute sub-culture



Subculture

By wendythirteen

"Who still thinks bands matter?" was the giant font Facebook status that grabbed my attention late last night while I was musing this column. Judging by the grievous lamentations when rock stars pass away, I'd say a lot of people think music matters. But maybe not bands... Nostalgia for lost youth? Memories of raucous teen times? Locked in your bedroom listening to 8-tracks crying about lost love? My generation was all about the band.

Most recent mainstream popular music artists are actually solo artists with dancers. The band, if there is one, is generally in the background or practically backstage. This has been eroding the concept of a band for a couple decades. The youth are being whitewashed. Bands were painted as degenerates while the record barons were selling you hyper-sexualized, nubile young women or writhing, fresh faced model-type boys.

Normal bands, as we in the underground live scene understand, are becoming the hype machine minority. Funny thing is, the backing tracks of these popular solo artists or remixing DJ's are based on shit that bands actually wrote.

It seems preposterous to be reading articles about how festivals aren't financially viable these days. Well, gee. Maybe that's because all of a sudden every Tom, Dick, and Harry is putting one on. Every weekend in B.C. is earmarked for a festival.

Local shows run the same gauntlet of supply and demand. With more venues fazing out local live music, you'd think that small shows that are still rolling would have better turnouts. Well that's not happening, either. It seems we have a generation gap of live music aficionados. I hear everything a festival show or have a gimmick

The days of the Plain Jane local show seem doomed. You poster, make events, and try not to pester and piss people off with a barrage of show propaganda, and still get fucking crickets some

It's funny how people find the money for these big ticket live music settings, yet I witness, show after show, people losing their shit about the possibility of paying equal to two Starbucks coffees to see between three and five local bands. I've even thought of setting up a GoFundMe page just so I could keep attempting to help the newbie bands experience a stage. Most nights I don't make a cent throwing a show. Once you've paid the sound / room fee and tried to split the

rest among the bands, there is nothing left. I had a band from Alberta the other night donate their pittance of the door money to the Washington State band. Of course, all the local bands followed suit. What an amazing fellowship among musicians.

I don't have the luxury of absorbing slow nights with liquor sales like I had running the Cobes or the advantage of being paid a wage at Thrashers anymore.

Being sober and older now, I certainly don't have the desire to make every gig into a trumped-up, ten band, raging shitshow. I hate trendy hype crap. It's just not me. It reminds me too much of living in the mainstream. I like the shadows

So I find myself at a crossroads. Soldier on with hopes that BC's new government can turn around the debacle that is driving young creatives out of BC with the ridiculous housing situation, or pack it in. The latter saddens me. I hate seeing posts saying, 'This is a great show, where is everyone?' It's not an anomaly anymore. It's happening a lot across our country. Has technology ruined our music communities? It's not necessary to leave your house any more, to reach out to people. So I come back full circle to the guestion that grabbed my attention last night. The thread had 58 replies and 116 likes when I last checked. That's a better turnout than most local shows

These are two of my favorite responses to Larry's question, "Who thinks bands still matter? Rylan says: "Local music matters. Support your

local scene. Help promote the shows. Share the music. It's simple, but people think it happens on its own. It doesn't. To have a healthy scene you need hard working people and dedicated music fans. Without it, a band is just some dudes jamming. There's no community without everyone's effort."

And Jean says: "I'll say yes! Bands are an incredible way to structure a lifetime. They create opportunities for shared perspectives, accountability, community, collaboration,personal evolution, social protest and elevated friendships. Cultural activism has a long history, especially in other parts of the world. Bands can be part of that history."





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Sado Mannequin

Interview by Roger The Shrubber

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

SM: Aidan, Carly and Susyn make up Sado Mannequin and we're still a little fresh for infamy but we did recently have a tuning disaster at Logans with the Corps and James T. Kirks!

AU: What is Sado Mannequin all about? Can you describe your music for someone who's never heard it before?

SM: So imagine if the Misfits and Ramones had a bastard child, that hung out with the Cramps for a couple days, I think that'd be us.

AU: Some of your material is rooted in horror is that correct? What can you tell us about the inspirations and themes in your music?

SM: It's definitely rooted in horror but we don't exactly follow the standard psychobilly style, it doesn't need to be all zombies and corpse brides to get the creeps. Inspiration-wise, it's $\stackrel{\cdot}{\text{horror}}$ movies, video games, dark thoughts, you name it.

AU: Do you have any albums out? Where can we find your music?

SM: Nope, and nowhere! But look out! It's comin'!

AU: Tell us about your recent show at Wheelies! It looks like it was off the hook!

SM: We love playing Wheelies. We played our first show there and it's always a wicked time. We played the most recent show with the Mandlebaums and they're killer fun.

AU: What are the most important components in a live Sado Mannequin performance? What can we expect to

see when you take the stage?

SM: So much yelling, caveman drums, backbone bass. We do our best to get the crowd going as the opening act.

AU: Where can we see you play next? Do you have a dream lineup for a live show?

SM: We're playing June 9th with the Plodes at: Surprise! Wheelies, We are actually playing a pretty dreamy lineup soon in Courtenay and Powell River with the HEX and the Poor Choices, but we definitely wish the Helletones were coming along for the ride.

AU: What's the scene like in Victoria right now, any local bands we should be looking out for?

SM: So many! The bands we just listed, Total Shit, Black Valley Gospel, Void Mirror, Consumer Report, the Mags, Line Traps, Broken Shoes, the Mants - There can be quiet nights but some nights will kick you in the face



and turn you inside out.

AU: What does this year hold for Sado Mannequin? Will you be recording? Touring? **Shooting more videos?**

SM: More shows, definitely. We've got a video and promo shoot coming up, and the record will follow soon after. Stay tuned for more.

AU: What else should we know about you that we don't already?

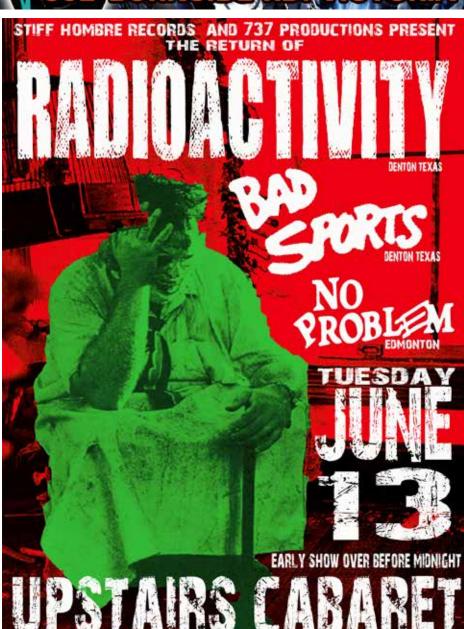
SM: Just in case you didn't already know, Susyn's a vegan.

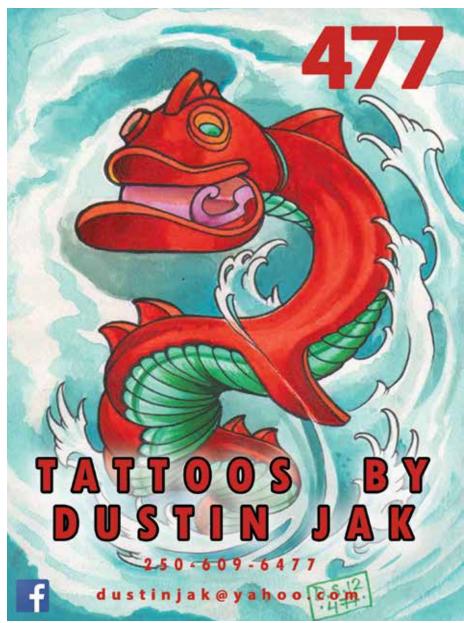
AU: Final words for readers?

SM: You know this, but... support local music! Bandcamp, merch, showing up, whatever. The small stuff makes a big difference.

facebook.com/Sado-Mannequin-959644017427443/

















































The Hallowed Catharsis

Interview by Stepan Soroka

Don't let the acronym fool you, The Hallowed Catharsis are anything but lazy stoners. The five-piece progressive death metal band have been cranking out genre-bending, aggressive music since 2013 and have recently dropped a psychotropic nightmare of a debut full-length album. We caught up with the band in their East Vancouver practice space to discuss the album, their upcoming tour and a 19th century nonsense poem called "Jabberwocky".

Absolute Underground: Who are you, and why are we here?

Sean Ip: We are The Hallowed Catharsis and we are here because... Kevin Emms: We're talking about our new album, *Solar Cremation*, and our upcoming tour.

Sean: The Sci-Fied and Fried Tour. June 7th to 24th, Western Canada. We are super excited to finally get out and see some new fans, see some new friends, and play for the people who have ordered our stuff

Kevin: And go as far as we can without falling into the abyss of the prairies and the Canadian Shield.

AU: Give us a brief history of the band.

Kyle: We started back in the summer of 2013. Some friends just wanted to jam and by accident Sean was at our practice one day and he started doing some screams. We invited him back and kept jamming. Lo and behold, a couple months later we were playing our first show at Funky's.

AU: You're about to release your full-length album, Solar Cremation. Tell us a bit about it.

Kevin: So, on our previous album *Organic Entrenchment*, we went really far into the storytelling aspect of our lyrics and our songs. Each of the songs told a story start to finish, and we went a little further with that with *Solar Cremation*. We decided to do a full concept album. Kyle had the idea of solar cremation and a casket going into the sun, and I took that and turned it into this big, crazy sci-fi story. We also realized that to help get across the story it would be really cool to add a visual element, which is when we started planning for the comic book that comes with the album.

Sean: It definitely snowballed. We kind of just wrote some songs and as we got further into it, it turned into this huge endeavour. It's been super exciting to work on it and see it, piece by piece, come out.

Kevin: I was personally really happy to jump on the concept album. We also see ourselves as a pretty proggy death metal band, and concept albums and prog work well. It helps us bring our fans deeper into the universe of the nerdy shit that we're doing.

Sean: It's kind of nice for me because instead of having to take

inspiration from outside stimulus, I'm inspired by stories that are made in-house.

AU: Tell us more about this comic book and the music video that goes with it!

Kyle: As the concept began to fall into place and we started thinking about artwork, we thought it would be a good idea to commission acomic book to help tell the story. If you follow along with the comic book as you listen to the album, it certainly helps add depth, and even clarifies some parts of the story. José Arias did a killer job with all of the artwork for the album, including the album covers, comic cover, and of course the comic itself. When it came timeto talk about music videos for Solar Cremation, our friend Rob Zawistowski offered to create a lyric video from the artwork in the comics. He did an unreal job animating the comic and bringing it to life in a way we never thought possible - definitely not your average lyric video!

AU: Can you explain the archaea that is mentioned in the lyrics throughout the album?

Kevin: Archaea are single-celled organisms. They are theorized to be possibly the oldest organism on the planet and have the ability to exist in extreme environments. They can exist synthesizing methane or they can use sunlight to create energy, or hydrogen. They don't really need an oxygen-rich environment like a lot of other conventional organisms. So we put them on an asteroid deep in space and we used some other elements from cool things we've heard in biology to create this sinister hive-minded organism that would infect you and give you psychotropic nightmares and take over your decision

making. It's pure sci-fi. There's a little bit of science and a lot of fiction

Kyle: And of course we all like classic art of all sorts of forms, so we reference Lewis C Carroll's poem "The Jabberwocky." That's how the

archaea manifests in the lead scientist who first gets infected, and throughout the album, there are references to the poem.

AU: Your last EP, Organic Entrenchment, received a one-star review on metaltemple.com. Do you feel like Solar Cremation will be better received?

Sean: I think we're aiming for at least a 1.7. The best thing from that was the guy saying, "I've never heard of this band, but from quick research I see that they are deathcore, and I don't like deathcore." And he just goes on to eviscerate us. It was so funny.

Kevin: It was funny that we were identified as deathcore. Someone just tagged us with that on Encyclopedia Metallum at some point. And me, as an old-school metal lover, I've been saying for years that we're not deathcore! Until the preorders for Solar Cremation came out and we hit the top of the deathcore charts for a couple of days. OK, whatever, I guess we're deathcore. Sorry, Dallas Turner.

Sean: It is cool because we've had that tag on us for a while... and whether we are or whether we're not, that's not up to us to decide, but its cool that with *Solar Cremation* it seems that people from all walks are digging it. People who hate deathcore but love technical death metal, people who only really listen to deathcore, they all seem to be digging it.

AU: Kyle, tell us about being a strong, independent brown man who don't need no naan.

Kyle: I was at school one day and I was making a joke about that meme about the sassy black woman, and my friend misheard me and he thought I said something about naan. Then I posted it on Facebook and got like 200 likes and then my

EDUCKEDUREN STENUDULG friend's like "Lyclusteer to make the shirt!" That's the whole sterv

friend's like, "I volunteer to make the shirt!" That's the whole story. Now I have a shirt that says that. Also, some backstory: I'm allergic to naan, so I don't need none. Maybe I should have opened with that.

Sean: Kyle cannot eat food.

Kyle: I'm allergic to food in general. Fruit platters for the riders, please.

AU: If you guys were stranded in space and had to eat one member of the band, who would it be?

Sean: I hate to say it, because they say your band is only as good as your drummer, but Kevin has been looking swole lately. I can tell. I would definitely go straight for the legs. But Nick would be a close second.

Kyle: I'm just too lean, who are we kidding. It's like ordering a plate of wings.

Kevin: We'd want to eat you to stop the starving puns.

Sean: We'd eat you out of spite.

AU: Why should someone who has never seen The Hallowed Catharsis go see you play live?

Sean: Because we are going to take your socks and rock them off you so hard. And we're gonna give you free earplugs. We care. Naw, we're out there and we're trying our best. We're working hard and honing our craft every day. It's always a different show and we're trying to have as much fun as we can onstage, because if we're not having fun how is anyone else?

AU: Any last words?

Kevin: Fleh!

Sean: Thanks everyone for taking the time. Slowly we've seen our name go from Hollowed to Hollowoo to Hallowed to The Hallowed Catharsis and it's really cool to be part of this huge metal pimple that's about to pop in Vancouver.

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PHOTO CREDIT: Derek Carr, Visions in Pixels





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Pervcore

Tales From The Gutter: Vol 1

By Apryl Fawn

As the pioneers of their aptly self-titled subgenre, Pervcore has been redefining the delineated boundaries of thrash punk since they stormed the Calgary scene in 2013. With the trademark scent of Jack Daniels, and the foretaste of kink hanging in air, frontwomen Emiko van der Pol and TerraLee Doolittle harness the wanton spirit of

the dominatrix, in a fervent passion reminiscent of the early days, when the ideologies of punk and metal first came to fruition. Transforming each performance venue into a carnival of sin and debauchery, their antics transcend the confines of everyday establishment, into a flagrant utopia for voyeurs, shock-rockers, and anyone looking to thrash.

The band's original members included guitarist Rob Salewich (Blackest Sin), drummer Ryan Boyko (stab.twist.pull, KYOKTYS, JAB), and guitarists Graham Riddle (DSO, formerly of the Knockarounds) and Jody (formerly of Scorched

Banditos). This lineup, clad in fishnets, leather bustiers, and the trademark "we-don't-give-a-fuck" attitude of the notorious punk subculture, played their first gig on April 19th of 2013, at Lord Nelson's pub in Calgary, AB.

It's not all about self-indulgence with Pervcore. This band comes bearing gifts. Victors of the beerchugging competition, a common Pervcorian sideshow, are rewarded with a fitting token of memorial - a brand new (we hope) vibrator to take home after the show. Waning batteries included. Dignity must be abandoned at the door. Enter, and allow your thoughts to be permeated by erotic satire, as the band broods over existential life crises. With titles such as "Stepmom," "Uncomfortable Masturbation," and "Get Fucked," no aspect of depraved human angst is left unacknowledged when Pervcore hits the stage.

If this isn't your kind of decadence, avoid the crowd and just absorb the raw talent exuded by these two buxom goddesses. With a lifelong passion for music and for singing, they've accrued some widely hallowed vocal faculties, and through years of development, they have made them their own. Inspired by the gritty seductiveness of female punk artist, Mia Zapata, the throaty vocal styles of Joan Jett and Janis Joplin, and the multi-octave sound of Iron Maiden powerhouse Bruce Dickinson, the result is an avant-garde juxtaposition of inimitable female talent. It's Pervcore.

And these sultry succubi aren't alone. They're backed by a tenacious band of brothers, whose level of innate skill is seldom rivalled. Their collective experience transcends many years, borders, and genres, and the list of accolades they carry with them dissolves any grounds for subterfuge. Receiving awards for Best New Band and Best Punk Band from the Calgary Beer Core, Pervcore combines the prodigious skillset of drummer Dallas Lobb (The Electric Revival), who won the CBC award for Best Drummer, and Kuba van der Pol (formerly of DOA, Powerclown),

CLERY CRIME

whose ingenious bass riffs earned him the title of Best Bass Player at the CBC Awards. Also sharing the stage with these prize-winning entertainers, are guitarists Craig Kubitzski (formerly of DIE) and Mike Davies (formerly of Riot City IV, Zero Hour, Beyond Possession). Kubitzski and Davies are known in the community for their duelling guitar solos. They use their instruments to create an intrepid dialogue, that without words, invokes an internal flame that lives on long after the stage lights flicker out. "We originally set out to find a backing band that would be willing to be led out in chains and collars," reveals Emiko. "We are very excited to have Mike (who played his very first show back in 1985, opening for Canadian hardcore punk band, SNFU) with us, following a nine year hiatus in his music career to cope with addiction." In a sardonic digression, Kubitzski cites Rod Torpison's Armada, featuring Herman Menderchuck as his greatest musical influence of all time. Regrettably, the two quirky groups won't be sharing a stage on this plane of existence. Armada, for those of you who don't know, is the three-man garage band popularized by the Canadian sketch comedy classic, Kids in the Hall.

As anyone who has seen this band live will tell you, there truly is never a dull moment. Their dramaturgy depicts attributes of a no-holdsbarred cabaret, merging elements of neoburlesque performances, anti-conformist and punk rock ideologies, and the uniquely cultivated earmark of each member. Pervcore is an all-out assault on the senses that will leave you drunk, sweaty, and begging for more.

Party with Pervcore this Canada Day weekend, at the Hilltop Resort in Beconia, MB, or on August 5th at Distortion Live Music Venue, where they'll be unveiling their latest studio album, *Tales from the Gutter: Vol I*.

facebook.com/Pervcore/









themes or topics?

JM: With the new album Parker and I touch on how we're the parasites leeching on to our celestial planet; diagnosed as "The Human Condition" in the song "Parasitic." Other songs touch on love, family and why there's a constant fight within my own self.

AU: You've just announced a "Greasy BC Tour," and

AU: What's the one thing that Protosequence wouldn't be caught dead without on tour?

JM: Brava, jazz cabbage, and our instruments!

AU: What other bands and/or projects are you guys involved in?

JM: No other bands or projects. Logan has helped our homies in Valyria and Tales of the Tomb on the skins, though.

AU: What should we know about Protosequence that we don't already?

SHEEMONON

JM: The true mastermind behind Protosequence is a blue heeler named Cosmo.

AU: Any final words for the nice readers?

JM: Thanks for all the support. If we're in your area, come to a show and say hi! Love, Peace, Extra Grease ™

facebook.com/pg/protosequence

Protosequence

Interview by Roger The Shrubber

AU: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Joseph McKee: Joe, Joseph or Lamb Chop. I'm most infamous for my Molson Muscle.

AU: Tell us about Protosequence, how long have you been around, what kind of music do you play?

JM: Protosequence is good times, weird laughs, liquid evenings and fields of jazz cabbage. We've been around for four years, myself only three. We play metal, because that what it is. But if you want something more: progressive technical deathcore.

AU: You're gearing up to release your second EP, tell us about it!

JM: Our new release is a more collaborative, cohesive product. We recorded drums and vocals with Greg Wright at Hillbilly Wizard Sound and guitars with Tylor Dory. Mixing/mastering was done by Chris Foster at First Strike Recordings. We also had Tylor lend his talents on piano. Diaro Irvine from Plaguebringer did a guest vocal spot. We're stoked to be touring with them this June!

AU: Does the new album explore any particular



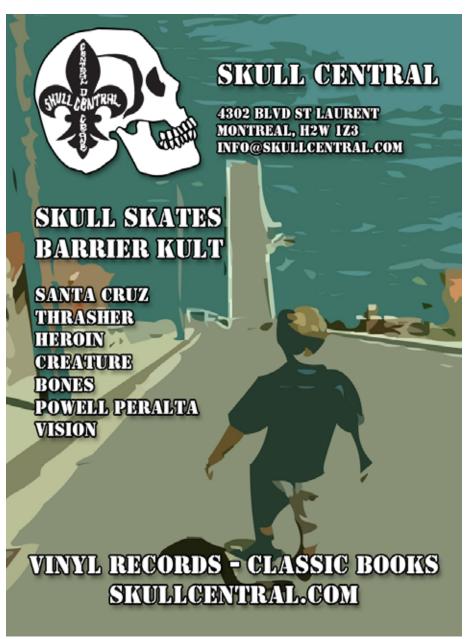
first things first, exactly how greasy are we talking here? Just so we can prepare ourselves, you know.

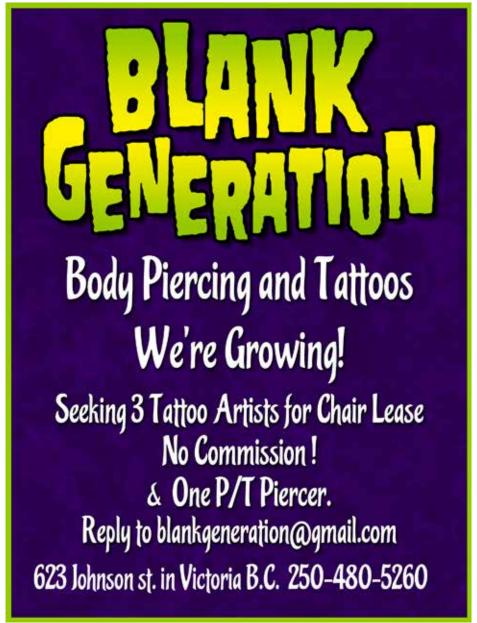
JM: Beer bongs, swimming in gravy, and gravy bongs.

AU: Any towns or shows you're particularly stoked to play?

JM: We're super excited to be heading out to Vancouver Island, but truthfully this whole tour. This is what we want to do: two days or two months, we are excited for every show.













Return of the Leech Out Of The (Frozen) Swamp

Bv Chris Walter

an option.

Our saga begins in the small icv town of Hay River, Northwest Territories, where Johnny Bandura, Rylan Goudreau, Robert Swallow, and James Osland attended school in the late 90s. Banding together mostly because nobody else was willing to hang with them, they formed a tight friendship but drifted apart after high school. Rylan and Bobby attended college, and Johnny and James travelled to Europe, but were soon deported as troublemakers. When the pair returned to Hay River, the

friends purchased a funky 1970s camper van and relocated to Fernie in the East Kootenays of British Columbia, where the temperature occasionally rises above zero. Remaining in the frozen north was not

In Fernie, the friends parked the camper at the top of a ski slope and lived rent-free. It was here that they formed Sip Yek Nom (Monkey Piss spelled backwards) and attempted to cover various skate bands such as NOFX and the like. In a rapid period of discovery, they switched to traditional style punk rock before settling on a unique and vulgar style that better suited them. Aggressive and guitar-

driven but backed with Farfisa-style keyboards, the band was difficult to describe but fun to watch. "We kind of became more and more offensive," Johnny Bandura admits. "The band was

like the Zombies-meets-the-Ramones, but with a lot of swearing." James, who was more interested in girls than music, left the band and was replaced by Johnny's brother, Willie

Sip Yek Nom's campy, 50s B-movie style trappings confused some of the punks, but also earned them a small but dedicated

following. Fernie, however, turned into a ghost town when the tourist season ended and the band returned to Hay River, where they worked hard to save for proper gear. While in town, Sip

Yek Nom played so often that they were forced to don garbage bags and play under the pseudonym The Leeches when locals stopped attending shows. The "fake band wrote songs on the spot and performances were mostly ad-lib, but the Leeches failed to impress the townsfolk, who much preferred Garth Brooks covers.

The band recorded "A Yottish Tale" in Hay River. and the single was enough to earn them a recording grant. This led to a full length selftitled album, which they recorded at the remote Spirit Walker Studios in Yellowknife. Not long afterwards, the band traveled to Edmonton and spent \$10,000 on Marshall cabinets at Mother's

Music. "Up until then, we'd been using fifty-watt Peavey amps we bought from the Pentecostal Church," remembers Johnny of the early days. Sip Yek Nom was on the rise. In 2001, Sip Yek Nom recorded their selftitled debut album and prepared to take the world by storm. Using the Book Your Own Life website, the band secured dates across Western Canada and set sail

in a gently used van. Touring BC and Alberta at whim, the guys quickly abandoned all hope of earning a living with their music. They did what they did for love, and maybe a six-pack or two.

Instead of booking tours logically, the band organized random hitand-run missions, driving hundreds of miles for a single show. They once waited eight days in Seattle for a twenty-minute support slot. The band peaked in 2004, with a seven-week cross-country tour supporting punk legends the Dayglo Abortions and the release of their second album, Blah Dittv. "Our girlfriends kissed us goodbye before we left, and they knew we wouldn't be the same when we returned," mused Johnny, With song titles such as "Kiss the Beef

Tongue," "Steamed White Mice," and "Stinky Cunt," they knew the sky was the limit. Unsurprisingly, the level of debauchery on that tour was even

higher than the band had imagined. They survived but just barely, and the various members returned home to salvage their damaged relationships.

Sip Yek Nom never officially broke up; they simply failed to regroup. Years passed, during which time the members morphed into semi-responsible adults. Johnny and Bobby were both living in Vancouver when they got together on a notion and began to jam. The new

group had less anger but was more versatile and still incorporated familiar themes such as swamp monsters, tundra rats, and B-movies. Johnny and

Bobby left Vancouver for the oil sands of Fort McMurray, and bass player Willie flew in from Toronto. The name Return of the Leech harkened back to the mystery shows in Hay River, a private joke only they understood. But this time they wouldn't be wearing garbage bags

Return of the Leech recorded their debut album, Escape From the Swamp and toured Alberta. The band was back in 2016 to record their second album, Dominate the Cesspool, and they were

> complete when Rylan rejoined on keyboards. Free from the shackles of punk. the EP featured a diverse number of instruments and styles, while still retaining much of the original vibe. Johnny happened to mention the EP while being interviewed by a Los Angeles DJ, which led to an offer to play the world-famous Whisky a Go Go on July 22.

Wait till those old hippies get a load of these

facebook.com/returnoftheleech/













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Marc Roy

and she took me on. I then learned from her and another artist named Corey Lyon.

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today?

MR: Marc Roy

AU: What shop do you work at? What makes the shop unique?

MR: I work at Scarecrow Ink in Chilliwack. I'd say that the size and layout of the shop make

it almost like a lounge area; a cool place for people to hang out

AU: Who else works with you there?

MR: I work alongside Cody Wilkins,

AU: What was the first tattoo you received and what was the first tattoo you did on someone

MR: I drew something in high

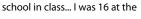


Alex Black, Vanessa Greenwich, Jesse Longbear, and

Matalea Johnson.

AU: How did you get started tattooing?

MR: I always drew and painted from a young age. After experimenting with some equipment that I purchased in Sherbrooke, and a few rudimentary pieces on my brother-in-law, I quickly realized that I needed a formal apprenticeship. It took me a few years to actually find one, but my break came when we were living in Victoria, BC. I got wind at the time that Gwendolyn Williams was opening up Painted Lotu Studios, and I inquired,





time. I ended up getting it tattooed on my chest. It's a weird eye morphy



good. I'll be attending the Calgary

convention in October and immediately after I'll be at the No Limits Tattoo Convention in New York.

AU: Do tattoos always have to have a deep meaning or can they be solely about the

MR: I personally think it should be about the art first and foremost. Tattooing exclusively for meaning tends to create barriers and restrictions with regards

to the visual aspects of tattooing.



face tribally thing. This would've

AU: What styles would you say you specialize in?

MR: Black and grey realism and



AU: Absolute craziest tattoo you've ever done?



colour realism.

AU: What do you love most about tattoos?

MR: I draw on people for a living and those same people trust me in rendering their ideas; to me it's the golden ticket. I get to practice my hobby, create and do what I'm passionate about day in and day out. So in that sense ever since I started tattooing, I haven't worked a day in my life.

AU: Been to any tattoo conventions lately? I hear you did very well at the Pittsburgh Bleed Black and Gold Expo.

MR: Yes, thank you! It was a good show... I took home four awards. I was also recently at the Edmonton Tattoo Convention. We ended up taking home a few more awards, so it's been very

Trouble in Little China shooting lasers out of his pinkies with a banner below saying "peasant magic."

AU: Any favourite types of music you like to listen to while working?

MR: Black metal.

AU: Advice for young artists?

MR: Proper apprenticeships, take pride in what you do, be professional and remember there are no shortcuts.

AU: How do people get ahold of you? Website, Facebook?

MR: Best is via my Instagram @mroytattooart or via email mroy tattoo art @gmail.com





West Of Hell

Interview by DJ Zang for Broken Neck Radio

Absolute Underground: 2016 was a very busy year for West of Hell, including performances at Armstrong Metal Fest, Loud As Hell, Metallion, and Vancouver Metal Cruise, just to name a few. Taking into account all the band members' side projects and the writing and recording of a new album, where do you guys find the time to get all this done?

Jordan Kemp: Well, once we have things lined up, we just make the preparation a priority. Yeah sometimes it is hard to co-ordinate everything,

what with the WOH members all being involved in other bands as well, but we all like to stay busy so we make it work.

AU: Speaking of the new West of Hell album, how is it coming along and is there a release date?

JK: The album is being mixed and mastered at the moment. I have heard a few preliminary mixes that are so killer. Rob Shallcross is doing a fantastic job. We all can't wait till it's ready to go. Really looking forward to showing everyone. We are hoping to release later this year.

AU: How has this album different from your previous album, 2012's *Spiral Empire*?

JK: Where we are at musically now has definitely developed a lot in the last few years, with the addition of our new guitarist, Kris Schulz. Writing songs with him involved is totally stepping our game up to another level, and I can see it going further in new exciting

directions as well. We still have some classic thrash moments, some new-school sounding progressions, odd time signatures and absolutely face-shredding solos. Yeah, the feel of the band has just progressed with having a new guitarist and a new drummer. We were very fortunate to have Ash Pearson play drums on this record and his groove is just stellar.

AU: Can we expect any album teasers soon?

JK: Well, we are playing a few new songs on the Vengeance in Hell tour, to give everyone a taste of what's to come and we are going to be filming a couple music videos and will possibly release a single/video before the record drops. So hang in there, it's coming soon!

AU: Where was the new album recorded?

JK: The drums were recorded at The Armoury in Vancouver, guitars and vocals at Infiniti in Victoria, and it is being mixed at the Chicken Coop in Victoria.

AU: Can you describe to everyone the atmosphere in the studio when West of Hell is recording?

JK: Being in the studio with Rob Shallcross is great. We have a lot of fun, crack a lot of jokes, there's a good vibe. It ain't all fun and games, though. We've been buds with Rob a while now and he really knows how to crack the whip and grind on us and push and push until aaaaaaahhhhhh FUCK! And then bam! Best take ever! So yeah, even the hard days in the studio end on a good vibe once we can listen back to

AU: The Mighty Ash from 3 Inches of Blood and Revocation worked on this new album behind the kit... how was it working with Ash?

Chris "The Heathen" Valagao: Ash is a bro and we've been friends for many years, he's a straight up solid guy and really helped us out when our original drummer got deported just before recording started. Ash's work on the record is very much his style at our speed, he's a high energy player with a lot of tasty embellishment all over the place.

AU: Did Ash do things differently with his work on this album or will his long-time fans see some 3 Inches of Blood and Revocation similarities?

Heathen: Andrew laid out a solid framework for these new songs, and then Ash stepped in and made it his own; Ash's fans will find signature licks all over this record.

AU: Will we see Ash on more West of Hell work?

Heathen: I think Ash's dance card is full right now, but who knows what might happen, maybe a surprise track here and there.

AU: You have a tour that started April 26th in Nelson BC, at the time of this writing, you are about to hit Calgary; are there any cities in Western Canada that you are NOT hitting on this tour that you want to throw a shout-out to?

Heathen: There are so many places that we would have loved to play, Prince George being one for sure, Kimberly, Fernie, Regina, etc.

AU: Reckless Ronny wanted me to ask, what's on your personal playlists and what musicians do you admire and get your influences from?

Heathen: Well for me, that's a big ass list. I like the new At the Gates, the new Anthrax, new Testament, Ghost, Behemoth, Abbath. My influences are vast, at the core would be Maiden, Priest, Dio, Halen, Motorhead, Pantera, Exodus, Forbidden, Obituary, Entombed, etc.

AU: Sean and Val have been working with a band called Metaspherical... can you fill us in with more details on that?

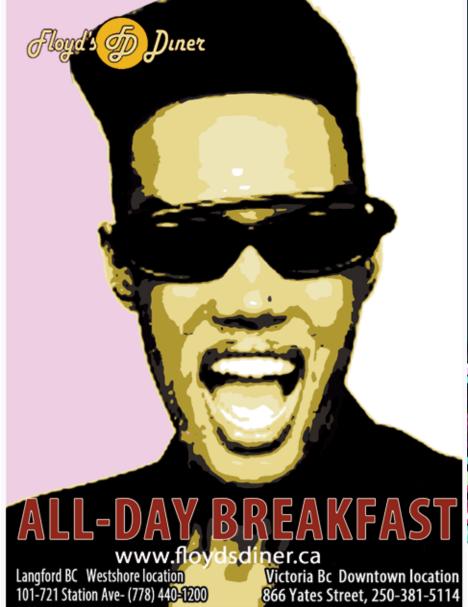
JK: Metaspherical is a rad project put together by guitar virtuoso Jason Morley. He managed to have some great musicians on the record, Gene Hoglan, Andy LaRocque and Kelly Shaefer, to name a few. Val and Sean also contributed. I actually put on a show May 12th at the Wise Hall in Vancouver, in which Metaspherical played their debut show. Kelly Shaefer from Atheist flew in to front the band.

AU: Lastly, you guys did a KILLER zombiethemed music video for the song "Water of Sorcery," off the last album. Will we see another great video at that level? And if a zombie apocalypse did hit, who in the band would get eaten first?

JK: Yes, there will be more epic vids to come. Val has worked in special effects in the film industry for years and has a lot of friends and contacts that get pretty stoked about doing some crazy shit in a metal vid. If the zombie apocalypse broke out, they would probably go for Val... but he would eat them first!

West of Hell is currently on the Vengeance in Hell tour with Revenger.

www.facebook.com/westofhell







Headpins

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?

Ab Bryant: Ab Bryant, bassist for The Headpins.

AU: Are you the original guys?

AB: We are the original guys

AU: What was the origin of The Headpins?

AB: The origin of the Headpins was a bar band, we had to keep ourselves working while we were in another band called Chilliwack.

AU: Oh yeah? I live in BC.

AB: Oh so you're familiar with the town then... We could have a music festival of bands just with city names, you know, Boston, Chicago, Chilliwack [laughs]. So yeah, around 79 in Chilliwack, myself and Brian McLeod, the original guitarist for the Headpins, our record company had went, the owner died, which was very unfortunate, and the company basically went into receivership. It was all in litigation with lawyers, so, we had to make money, so we thought well, we are pretty well known in Vancouver so let's put a bar band together, [it was] myself and Brian, and Matt Frenette from Loverboy...

AU: The drummer?

AB: Yes, and a singer named Denise McCann, who

was a well-known Vancouver RnB singer, basically we didn't audition or anything, we just said okay, here's the band, the four of us. We had a sound man named Ted Wozniak, and he had come from Streetheart, and that's where Matt was from at the time.

AU: It's very incestuous.

AB: Very incestuous, we all played in the same band, or different bands but we all traded chairs for a number of years. Anyway, so we went into a rehearsal studio, we learned about ten covers and about seven of McLeod's original tunes, and that was the band.

AU: Wow.

AB: And that's how it started. And we went on from there to playing bars, and as I said before, we were well known, so it was easy for us to get the bar gigs, so we jumped right into the bar circuit and we immediately started playing, and we were playing every week, finally things worked out with Chilliwack we signed a new record deal with Chilliwack... Headpins still existed, but by that time we had changed singers and we had Darby in the band and Matt left, so then we had Bernie in the band, and that was very early on, like those two were only in the band very briefly. So we got Bernie and Darby and then we realized we had a real band. Then we went back to Chilliwack, recorded with them, and then the label that we had signed with for Chilliwack realized that they had another band in the Headpins and said, "Well why don't you guys make a Headpins record?" So myself and Brian did two bands for a number of

AU: Solid Gold Records?

AB: Solid Gold, yeah, so we did two bands for about three years, and then we sort of had to choose, because Chilliwack, I don't know if you know this, but Chilliwack was probably the biggest... the popularity of that band at least in America, it was, because we had a number of top hits, so we had to choose. For whatever reason, we chose the Headpins [laughs], which is good and bad, because we left Chilliwack and you know, our good pal Bill Henderson, but playing live with the Headpins was more me and Brian, and that's how it happened.

AU: How did you originally discover Darby Mills?

AB: I believe that Bernie originally discovered Darby, and actually I had seen her in another band called, um, oh what was the name of the band., Steelback, that's right. So Bernie said to Brian, "Hey I found us a singer, I got a singer," and Darby was playing in her band. So anyways...

AU: What does this Laketown Music Festival mean to you guys, as to so many Canadian

AB: Most of these guys, these bands, we have done gigs with over the last 10 to 30 years, it's always great to play with these guys because we have known them for so long, and we have done previous tours together, and really the special thing about it is that in the past it was almost adversarial or competitive because you would want to one up the other bands, because it was your livelihood at the time, although it still our livelihood, or at least part of our livelihood part time, those feelings aren't the same. There is a real camaraderie now, and we enjoy seeing each other. You know it's always great seeing your own buds, and even though you played in different bands you have a lot of history together, and I have never been here, I have never been to the Cowichan Valley. I have been to Duncan, because we played there a few times, but I have never been up here, so yeah.

AU: Describe the scenery.

AB: It's absolutely beautiful, it's British Columbia rainforest.

AU: I'm seeing trees, I'm seeing mountains.

AB: Absolutely beautiful. I haven't been down to the lake yet though, have you been down to the

AU: I went to the river but the river was really cold.

AB: Oh did you go in?

AU: No, I just put my feet in it.

AB: Oh, alright well I'm gonna try going in tomorrow.

AU: So the band has a real badass attitude and stuff, like some of these bass lines, you guys

are hard.

AB: Hah, well we're serious, but that's the way the band has always been. It was never a pleasant band to go see, it was always



been intense, and that's the way it has always been and the way the band started in the first place. So now we have our new singer Katrina Lawrence, who has now filled in for Darby, who is off doing her solo career. Katrina has filled in, and she just did a great job tonight, really proud of her.

AU: Her first show?

AB: No this her second show, but the first bia show, so this is really her first show, I guess.

AU: So where did you discover her?

AB: She's from the Okanagan, and Alfie, our keyboard player knows her and I don't think they have actually played together in a band, but they know of each other, and I met her years ago, as

AU: Final words for Canadian fans who are here rocking out with all these amazing bands? We had Trooper here yesterday, Loverboy, Prism, you've been in every one of these bands.

AB: I have played with the guys from Loverboy, Prism, lots of them. Is Chilliwack here, are they on the schedule?

AU: Well no, because you're here right now. Are Chilliwack still around?

AB: Chilliwack still exists with Bill and his brother Ed, and Jerry playing drums. They are still a great band, but anyways you're seeing Canadiana here, and it's just lovely so come on out!

www.headpins.net/

PHOTO CREDIT: Jovan Nenadic and Janina Nenadic

Katrina Lawrence

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with today?

Katrina Lawrence: Kat!

AU: Kat! You just killed it at Laketown Rock.

KL: Thank you, I'm glad you had fun. AU: Describe the experience

and the scenery here, and your experience of becoming the new singer for the Headpins.

KL: Well, first of all I love the island, the people here are amazing. I used to actually live here, so yeah, the experience was amazing, the people were wonderful and happy and everybody

has been really helpful. Everybody has been really great, I mean very helpful, backstage, upfront, very warm and welcoming. I feel like I'm really appreciated, and I'm happy to be here with the love everyone is showing me. I mean what more do you want, you're playing music, it's supposed to be a good time.

AU: You're probably used to like a stadium or something, but when you look around here, it's all mountains and trees

KL: Well that's the island and BC for you, and that's what I'm saying, like I have lived all over Canada, but BC has got absolutely everything you could ask for and more.



AU: So this is your first or second show?

KL: We did a show, but it was private, so this was the first public show we have done

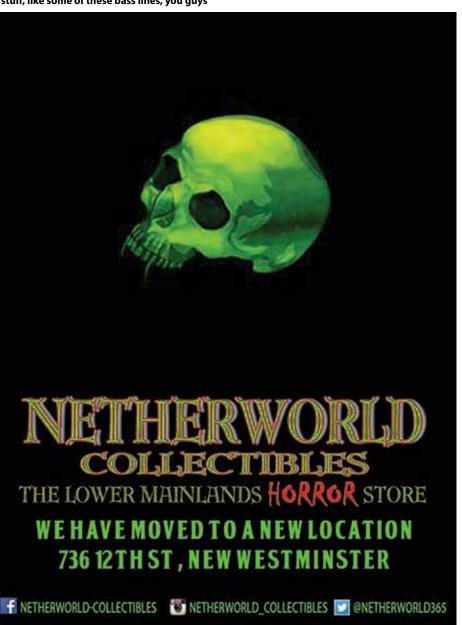
AU: What does it mean to you to be continuing the legacy of the Headpins, were you a fan



KL: Honoured. absolutely honoured, and yes I was very much so. Darby has been a huge influence obviously on my singing career, she is one of my idols, and the band, love their songs, so yeah it's absolutely an honour.

AU: Anything else you want to add? KL: Rock and Roll!!

www.headpins.net/











Calgary Horror Convention Tales From The CryptKeeper

Interview with John Kassii by Ira "Horrorshow" Hunter

Transcribed by Trevor Lawrence Reid

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

John Kassir: Hi, this is John Kassir and you know a lot of people would say I'm infamous for a lot of different things, especially my friends from high school but I think you guys probably called me because you're interested in my history as the voice of the Cryptkeeper from Tales From The Crypt.

AU: Oh my god, you just made my life. But you got

JK: No, I actually started out in the theatre as a theatre actor I got my degree in theatre in college and moved to New York to do my first off-Broadway show. I had also done sketch comedy for a number of years with some friends from college and we were a bit successful at it. Toured around the world for the USO, performing for US troops. In between theatre gigs I was supporting myself by street performing in front of the Metropolitan Museum and then I got a part in an off-Broadway show about stand-up comics called "Three Guys Naked From The Waist Down." I know that sounds pretty odd, sounds like a gay musical in the village. While I was doing it, I was approached by Star Search which was in its first season, wondering whether I would come on and perform and I was like, "Well, what as a singer?" and they were like, "No, as a stand up comedian." And I said, "Well, you know I'm not really a stand-up comic, I'm just playing one." And they were like, "Well you can win \$100,000." I'm like, "Fuck, I'll do it." I went on the show and, having a background in sketch comedy, I was writing these bits each week... basing m act on a guy who was addicted to television and I kept winning each week. I was doing stuff like the Wizard of Oz in two and a half

minutes and finally wound up in the semi-finals, beating Rosie O'Donnell, who was unknown at the time. Then I beat Sinbad in the finals, who was also unknown at the time, and wound up winning \$100,000. The next thing I know they're like, "Oh, you're going to be opening for Tom Jones in Las Vegas!" and I'm like "How am I going to do that? I have no fucking act!" I had to start out with 20 minutes as an opening act and eventually as a headliner had to wind up with an hour to an hour and a half of material. And a lot of my stuff was doing different voices and characters then I started getting asked to come in and audition for voice-over work. At first I had gotten, my first series that I got on consistently, I mean I did a number of pilots for some of the networks but my first long term series was 1st and 10 on HBO which was their first comedy series about a football team and starred Delta Burke as the owner of the team and OJ

Simpson was the general manager and they had different football stars on the show each week. I played the Bulgarian field goal kicker who could kick 60 yard field goals so that was kind of a funny character. I had to do an accent. "Zagreb Shkenusky from the California Bulls.



I fuck you both, yes?" I wound up on that show for like six years. But during that time HBO asked me to come in and audition for the Cryptkeeper from *Tales From The Crypt*. And I was like, "Oh my god! They're making that into a series!" I had collected the comic books as a kid and just thought it would be kind of a cult thing. HBO was just starting to become mainstream and Tales From The Crypt was something that really helped blow HBO into the stratosphere. I went into Kevin Yagher's studio where they were having the auditions, he was going to be directing the Cryptkeeper sequences as well as making the puppet and directing the puppeteers, and so they gave him the job of helping to find the voice. He had this little boombox recorder that I started doing this voice into and he was like, "Yeah, yeah! That's good. Do more of that." He starts laughing, I start laughing and I start cackling in this voice. So the next day they had me audition the voice in front of Joel Silver and Richard Donner, two of the biggest producers in Hollywood and the next thing I know, I'm doing the voice of the Cryptkeeper. And the rest was history.

AU: So you just nailed it?

JK: Yeah. I think I understood the material having grown up with the comic book and having gotten to see the puppet in Kevin Yagher's studio that he was working on. He still hadn't even perfected it vet. He was still working on certain aspects of it and they didn't give him much budget to start with until the show got bigger. You'll notice in the first season, the Cryptkeeper talks slower and more ominously. And that's just because the puppet's mouth didn't move very well. So when he perfected it for the rest of the seasons, he have me doing the voice faster and funnier with more of a standup comic's delivery. Which was something that I had

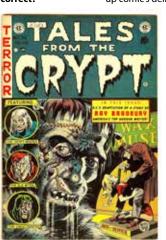
originally auditioned but that we had to hold off on until we got the puppet perfected. What a great show. These guys put everything into it and made a show that everybody was really proud of.

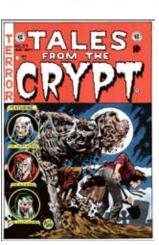
AU: Yeah, I was re-watching some Tales From The Crypt episodes and there is some serious sex, violence and blood in them. It must have been pretty boundary pushing at the time.

JK: Well, it wasn't TV, it was HBO. It was funny cause they got that tagline from a screening of *Tales From The Crypt*. Some of the HBO executives were sitting in the audience and somebody goes, "Oh man, this is great TV," and the person turned to them and said, "It's not TV, it's HBO." That became their tagline for many years Tales From The Crypt not only launched the idea but you know up until then most

of the stuff that they were doing on HBO was sports, comedy and sex. They didn't have the restrictions so they could do that and this of course became horror, comedy and sex. At a certain point I had worked on three different HBO series. Obviously *Tales* From The Crypt worked well cause it was an anthology series where each week there was something different. And people had already tried to do stuff like that or are still trying to do stuff like that, you have Tales From The Darkside, Masters of Horror and this kind of thing but I think the one thing that made Tales From The Crypt stand out was that it was based on the comic book with the Cryptkeeper as your host and so there was a consistency to the show, not just to the episodes. The way that Rod Sterling gave you that opening every week and he would stand there and tell you [in Rod Sterling's voice] "The ride you are about to take is.... Watch that stop sign up ahead....

The Twilight Zone." and that kind of thing had its own identity. I think that's why the Cryptkeeper is still so popular and why he became the pitch-man and the icon and the most consistent part of the show because each week they knew that the Cryptkeeper was the ride up to the top of the roller-coaster before it dropped you on the ride. And he made it seem like it was OK and fun that this was tongue in cheek. The fact that Tales From The Crypt is more popular now than it was, just goes to show you that the kids were watching it and we had no idea. But it made a lot of sense, I mean, as a kid I would have watched it. I had the comic books because it had such a great feel to it. It's a creepy puppet. What kid is not going to want to watch a puppet, no matter how scary? There are so many people who come up to me and say "Oh, you were the scariest thing on TV. You're the reason







I watch horror and I had to face that as a kid and it still makes my skin crawl and your voice, when I would hear it from the other room, I would come running. I'd hear your voice and see the puppet and my parents wouldn't let me watch it but I'd sneak down and watch it anyway." I'm sure our guys would have held onto the rights if they knew how popular it was within this whole new adult generation of people who grew up with Tales From The Crypt.

AU: When is this new *Tales From The Crypt* incarnation M. Night Shyamalan thing. Are you doing the voice again?

JK: We're not involved in it at all.

AU: That's bullshit.

JK: We don't have the rights anymore. So the Gaines family, you know, William Gaines who created the comic book at EC Comics. His dad had EC Comics and William Gaines took it over and brought us everything, Tales From The Crypt and Tales From The Vault, Vault Of Horror, and Two-Fisted Tales and all those great horror magazines but also brought us Mad magazine and other great comic books. It's like the template which comic books are based on now. The fact that there is a comic code on the comic books is due to Tales From The Crypt. Mothers all over America were saying, "My kids are reading this trash and it's going to make them into juvenile delinquents." They went to congress and they tried to get them banned.

AU: The *Tales From The Crypt* episodes, were they directly taken from the comics in a lot of cases?

JK: Yeah, every single one of them except the last one which was the animated one with the three

pigs. Every single one of the other ones were all based on one of the comic book stories. In fact, a lot of the episodes used the comic book at times as a storyboard.

AU: That's probably how they got all the big name directors cause they read the comics.

JK: Yeah, or at least they had the comic at their disposal that it was based on and obviously they had great television writers who came in, wrote the episodes and the stuff for the Cryptkeeper. And they may not have stuck directly with the story. They may have dramatized it in a different way to play it out a little differently cause they had to fill more time, or to

make it more interesting for television, or add women or sexiness or language. A lot of people were introduced to it once it was re-released on Fox but edited for commercials and content, and nudity and language. Still a good show but you know going back to the idea now that somebody else has the rights, when William Gaines died, the rights went to his family and since my guys Joel Silver, Dick Donner, Walter Hill, Bob Zemeckis, David Giler, these very big producers didn't hold onto the rights, not knowing how and when the show would be popular again. They sold the rights off to somebody else and supposedly they are in the lap of TNT and M. Night Shyamalan. But there is some controversy about that too because I guess in-between some other people had rights and they say they still own them. So I don't know what's happening with it.

AU: People were freaking out when they said they weren't going to have the Cryptkeeper. There was an uproar.

JK: I would think that when they got the rights I'm assuming they thought that they might have rights to the Cryptkeeper we used and I think that maybe they were a little upset that they didn't have him.

AU: Are you looking forward to the Calgary Horror Con?

JK: I am really looking forward to that. I've been to other parts of Canada but I've never been to Calgary and I hear it's an amazing city. For years, I have had fans contact me on Facebook "When are you coming to Calgary?" I know it's a big one and it's a fun one. I'm looking forward to it, the fans are looking forward to it, it's going to be an awesome convention.

AU: We are planning a screening of *Demon Knight* at the Globe Theatre on Saturday June 10th at 9pm would you be interested in coming down and doing an

intro or Q&A in the Cryptkeeper voice?

JK: Oh yeah. We had a screening of it here in Hollywood and Ernest Dickerson and myself showed up. We talked to the audience prior and we did a little Q&A before and after and it was great. It's such a great movie. It's in my top five horror movies for sure. And that's not because it's a *Tales From The Crypt* one... It's such a great movie with great actors and great villains in it.

AU: I heard you did a screening an appearance in Denver around last Halloween?

JK: They did something at the Gothic theatre in Denver. They had a rock concert. Ari Lehman has his band there, First Jason, a Kiss cover band and another local band, The Howls. I was your stage host, introducing the bands and stuff. It was a lot of fun.

AU: I heard that they did the puppet there and you did the voice?

JK: In Denver? No. The original puppet takes like five puppeteers to make it work. It's an expensive venture. To fly and hire five puppeteers and not only that but you it's sitting in a vault somewhere and not easily accessible. And each episode they had to change all the rubber on that puppet. It's so thin and breaks down so that it moves like flesh. It's probably sitting looking like a mechanical piece of machinery in a vault or in Kevin Yagher's studio. They did make a second one that was easier, that was voice activated. That we used for promos and stuff but I never thought it was nearly as good or as alive.

AU: Are you going to have those Cryptkeeper masks at the convention to get signed?

JK: I have photos. I have one Cryptkeeper, kind of like one of those flat cardboard masks with the little wooden thing. They were given out at the premiere of "Bordello Of Blood." And I bring that to pose with photos of people. It's a fun thing to do. People are always trying to steal it.

AU: Any other upcoming projects you want to pump up here?

JK: I've been working on a lot of animated stuff. In the new *Planet Of The Apes*, I did a lot of ape stuff, various apes, and chimps. I work a lot for Illumination, who does all the *Despicable Me* movies. Disney obviously and

some of the other studios. I've got a movie in the LA film festival that's coming out that I co-starred in called *And Then There Was Eve*. I play a shrink in that which is kind of interesting. I'm here working. All these years. 37 years. It's been great.

AU: Your list on IMDb is out of control my friend. You were Crazy Smurf, Deadpool in the video game, this *Reefer Madness* musical thing, the *Three Stooges* and the new *Pete's Dragon*. Oh my god. And the Cryptkeeper.

JK: Yeah, I'm very lucky. You know I work hard at it obviously. It's very hard to remain working through your 40s, 50s, 60s. You know as an actor, it's not easy to continue to do. For most female actors it's even harder, you know. They're work falls off at 40 and men at 45 or 50. Me, being a voice actor, not being typed-out by my age or race even whether I'm human or not. It's like you say I get to play Deadpool, I get to play Smurfs, I get to play Buster Bunny, whatever. I get to play at so many different things. A dragon, you know? So I feel real privileged to be part of the community of voice actors because so many of them are so talented. They are some of the most talented people and you've never even seen their face.







Annihilator

Interview with Jeff Waters By Erik Lindholm

Absolute Underground: How are you? Where are you? Paint a scene

Jeff Waters: I'm working in the home studio in Ottawa now on the next record, saving my files now. Everything is digital these days. It's a process. You have to go with the sounds you've got; you captured them a certain way, they have a certain tone, and once you have them you can't go back. I'm referencing records I enjoy from Carcass, Metallica, Arch Enemy, and mixing and adjusting instruments. It's the third mix of our 16th studio album and I'm ready to die mentally. It's been a three month process of non-stop album. You work till 3,4,5 AM on your ideas. It's great in the studio, and the first couple months its exciting and by the end you hate it! (Laughs) And now I'm six hours out from finishing it and that is a good life.

AU: So many records have been killed by bad production and EQ versus songwriting.

JW: It's a tough art to do. I do 100 things with this band. Mixing, mastering, engineering, writing, recording, bass, guitars, singing, writing drums, management, booking – you can't be all that good at all those things. Too many things.

AU: You're one of the worst merch airls I've ever seen, you're up on stage playing guitar and no one can get a t-shirt.

JW: I'm working on that (laughs). AU: First **Canadian tour**

JW: Basically, why we are touring

in 20 years! Why

is that?

Canada now is, we haven't played for a long time! I think we will do well here. Booking agencies weren't sure. There are a lot of good metal fans here, and they know the big bands, and they know Annhilator. They've followed us on the internet and they'll come and check us out. I said, "Screw the agents," and put a pile of money aside from my bank account and said, "I'm prepared to lose it all, I'm gonna do it"! I've been flying the flag for decades and its time to bring it home. I needed to do it, no matter the turnout. I was suprised, tickets are selling out across Canada. I don't have label support, tour agencies, anything. I did it myself. I picked up the phone and did it myself. It's gonna be a great time.

AU: We just saw Razor in Vancouver at Modified Ghost. It's wicked to see the old guard getting stage time! They delivered!

JW: Canada had three bands; very influential. Razor, Exciter, Anvil. They had the intitial impact. Huge impact on "The Big Four" and many other bands. They all signed some shitty record deals and bad management. They didn't get the support they needed. Annhilator was signed to Megaforce in New York at the time. They distingrated after a few albums. The real deal, those three bands, they spawned a ton of records and were super influential. A lot of the older metal publications knew it at the time, and that is how word got around. Also from going to shows. This

was the time before the internet! You knew those three bands had impact. It's sad they couldn't keep going at it, you know?

AU: Juno winner for Metal/Hard Music Album of the Year for 2017s Suicide Society... what do you make of formal recognition of metal music in Canada at this time, what does that mean

JW: We were nominated at that is amazing and unexpected. The last album we did, Suicide Society, is not our strongest. It's maybe a "top ten record" for us. I think what happened, is a few of the judges said, "We have to at least nominate this band, they've sold a lot of records and are doing well." Then we got the call. It is an honour. It is what it is. It is politics. The contest angle is silly anyway. I did have a great steak dinner there. And got to dress up in a jacket. It was nice to see a lot of people. Saw Brian Adams, who I knew from Vancouver days. A lot of fun.

AU: Title track "Suicide Society" is dystopian massive. What inspired you to write it, and what should be done about it, in your view?

JW: You have a very short window to write lyrics, and if you're lucky you get to ram in a complete detailed story in two or three verses. It's not easy. You must be very specific. With that song, it was a general thing, "look at what humanity has done as it evolves," without getting too cheesy. I took a paper and wrote down everything negative that we've done as a species. And I rammed it into the song. I put in one tiny ray of hope at the end of the song: "but it's not too late to change." It winds up being a bit cliche and cheesy because we are rattling off line after line of all the stupid things we've done. (laughs) I'm Canadian, so I have the humour and the cheese built right in. Have to try and shut that off as much as possible, otherwise all albums are all comedy.

AU: And a new record in the pipeline... lets talk about that. What themes are you exploring?

JW: It's out in the fall. I gotta wait till the record company wants to start press for that one AU: Who are you stoked on bandwise from

Canada right now?

JW: I'm not following current stuff. I'm in my own

world. When I listen to music, I listen to the old school guys putting out current records. I'm finally done this new record - I've stayed away from the new Overkill, Testament, Metallica cause I didn't want to explore them, be a fan, and have it affect my songwriting. For the last record, I felt Layne Staley, Ozzy coming out in the vocals. So for this one, I stayed away from that and I'm determined to do my own thing. For the music, it's so easy to borrow from these bands without realizing it. Gotta stay original.

AU: What is your favourite piece of guitar related gear and why?

JW: For 12 years, I've been on this pedal called Val Halen Phase 90. Dunlop or MXR was making it. Its for guitar solos. Van Halen got this pedal, it sweeps the frequencies back and forth around the same frequencies that pick up the guitar pick when it hits the strings. This pedal accentuates solos and makes it sound remarkable. On the flipside, if you're sloppy, it makes the mistakes stand out. That is a pedal I tell everyone about. 2005 "Schizo Deluxe" brought it into our recordings. Any metal lead guitar player... try it. You will understand.

AU: What advice do you have to young Canadian metal bands coming up on how to approach today's industry?

JW: As an artist, you have to decide what kind of artist you want to be. Weekend warrior? Play in clubs on the weekend and have fun, have a real job. Do you want to write and record music and not have to live off it? A serious hobby. Or do you want to risk losing, family, friends, health - you name it - and give it all 100% living, breathing, starving, into music. 24 hours a day. If you want to work in the music business, take care of the business. Without that, you won't have a music career. Learn about the industry.

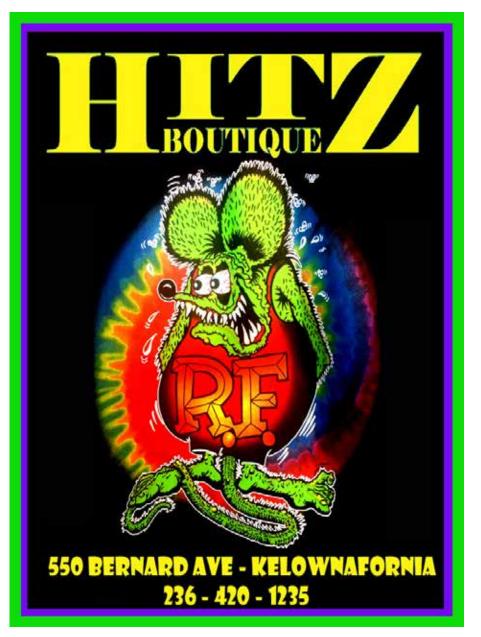
AU: Last words to the faithful metalheads across this great land:

JW: Keep up the metal faith, and keep this music alive! Support Canadian and international metal bands, they need it no matter what level.

www.annihilatormetal.com

CREEPY SIX FILMS' ONLINE STORE







Wormwitch

Interview by Stepan Soroka

Wormwitch emerged into the Vancouver metal universe recently, but despite their youth as a band they have made a mark on the scene that most bands would spend many years working towards. Their live shows will obliterate your senses, and they just released a crushing debut full-length on Prosthetic Records. We caught up with guitarist Colby Hink ahead of their American tour to talk about the new album, mortality, and Lord of the Rings.

* Committees

Absolute Underground: Give us a brief history

Colby Hink: We started up in late 2015 after the dissolving of the old band that Robin, myself, and our original drummer Max played in. We immediately released a demo through Rainville Records consisting of songs we had originally written for the old band. We wrote, recorded and released a single called "Coffin Birth" shortly afterwards and threw it online, it was the first material that we had written for Wormwitch. Our best bud Steve from Prosthetic Records ended up stumbling across it and reached out to us, and after a few thousand emails and Skype calls we signed on to their roster. We spent the better portion of the next year writing and recording material for our first full length record, Strike Mortal Soil, released it, and here we are. Present day.

AU: Tell us about the new record!

CH: It's an album, it's got ten heavy metal songs on it. It's mostly reddish but it's got black around the edges. We set out to write a record that sounded like a skull-blasting through the cosmos at unfathomable speed. We wanted it to sound like ice cold steel, but also hot devil's dust. It's really a melting pot of all our influences, so it covers a lot of stylistic ground. We were full of burning rock spirit and we poured a bit of everything that excites us into the album. It's erratic and spontaneous, but we're very proud of it and we're excited to perform it far and wide.

AU: Metalsucks.net has described *Strike Mortal Soil* as "terrifyingly vile," and "so filthy,

stimulates you in ways that a lot of popular media doesn't.

dark, that's a loaded question

with infinite answers. Music with a dark energy grips you like nothing else. Throughout history,

"good art" has often shown itself to be dark in some respect. It's universally relatable and it

AU: The former incarnation of Wormwitch, Dead Hand, was basically a hardcore band. On *Strike Mortal Soil* we hear a blend of black metal and heavy metal. Is it a conscious decision on your part to have your fingers in many pies?

CH: Dead Hand was something else entirely. Robin, Max and I were more or less in that band for the fun of playing in a band, touring, etc. Our bassist was the hardcore guy, so when he quit we all figured we might as well start something new, something more our style. The wide blend of influences in Wormwitch definitely hasn't been a conscious choice. We're all inspired by a lot of different sounds and feelings and really wanted to incorporate all that we could into this record. We never wanted to decide to be an X band or a Y band, Wormwitch is just our all encompassing outlet. No need for a thousand side projects to express the various aspects of who we are.

AU: Can you tell us about some of the lyrical themes you tackle on *Strike Mortal Soil*?

CH: The lyrics on the album cover some different ideas, but there's a loose ongoing theme that deals with being empowered by the concept of mortality. A human being has one short life, and that frightens a lot of people. We wanted to push the idea of rejecting that fear and understanding that a finite life is what gives everything you do gravity and meaning.

AU: I know Robin is a big fan of Tolkien



mythology. Does that creep into the lyrics at any point?

CH: We're all big Tolkien fans and yeah, it absolutely does. Tolkien's work influences us in a ton of different ways. The lyrics, the themes, the general spirit. There's a direct quote from *The Silmarillion* in our song "So Below," and the name of our demo (*The Long Defeat*) was taken from *The Lord of The Rings*.

AU: You guys are about to hit the road for an American tour with Numenorean. Why should someone who has never seen Wormwitch play live come and check you out?

CH: Our live show really appeals to people who like being both run through with ancient blades, and also obliterated by spells. You should definitely come see us if you enjoy the feeling of being tossed into a dungeon over and over and over.

AU: You've only been around since late 2015 but have signed to a well-respected label and released a full length album. That's a pretty strong performance right out of the gate. Care to give any advice to brand new bands, or to someone who is thinking of starting a band?

CH: Make sure that every member of your band is equally driven, and that everyone has the same goal in mind. A member that is pulling in a

different direction will be dead weight. Spend every possible moment working on the band and make it one of your life's priorities. We'd have a tough time doing what we do if we had careers we couldn't take time away from, or had other factors keeping us at home.

AU: If Wormwitch was lost in Moria and you had to eat one member of the band to survive, who would it be?

CH: Ideally we'd have lembas bread or something, but if we really had to eat someone it would definitely be Cam. He's the beefiest and would yield the most fruitful harvest.

AU: What does the future hold for Wormwitch?

CH: Lots of touring and a new record when the time is right. There's some really cool tours in the works right now for North America, and hopefully we'll get to Europe before the next album is ready.

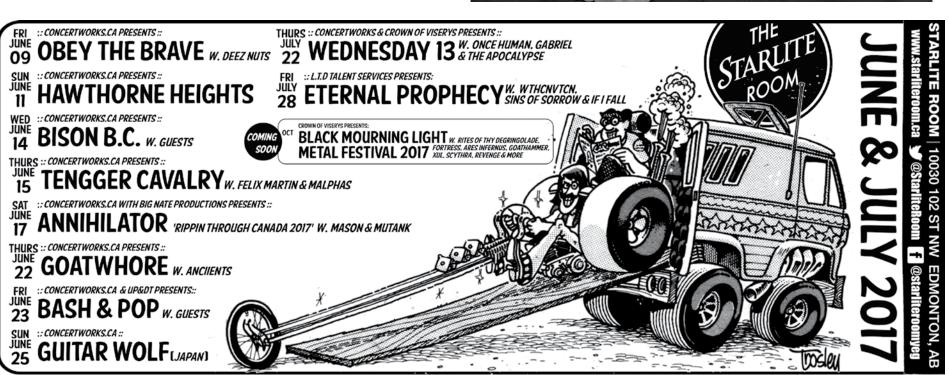
AU: That's it. Anything you would like to add?

CH: Check us out online (wormwitch.com) or on the road. Thanks for the interview, my friend.

www.wormwitch.com

PHOTO CREDIT: Avrinder Dhillon





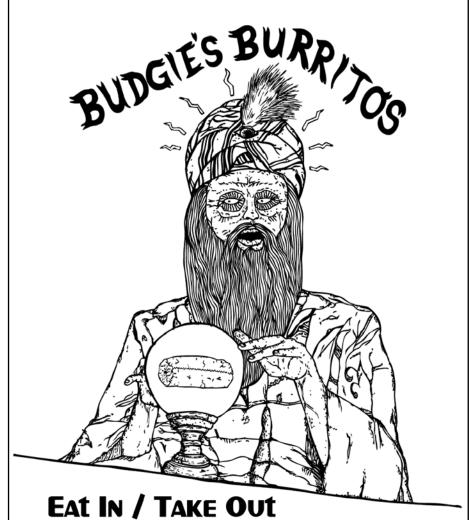




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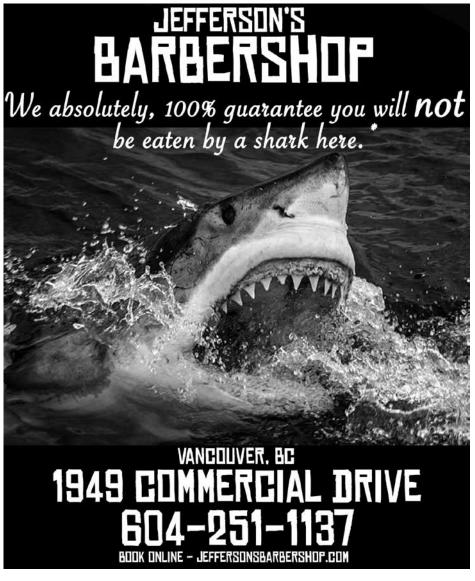
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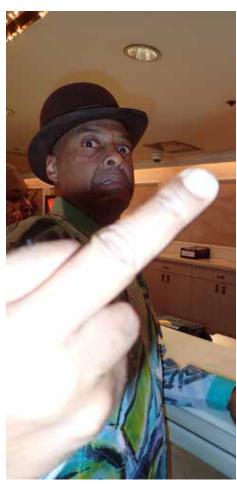
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Punk Rock Bowling Dr. Madd Vibe and the Missing Links

Interview with Dr. Madd Vibe a.k.a. Angelo Moore Transcription by Aeryn Shrapnel

Absolute Underground: Can we walk and talk? What just happened?

Angelo: My name is Angelo. I just played with Dr. Madd Vibe and the Missing Links. I'm Dr. Madd Vibe and the rest of my band are The Missing Links.

AU: Haha, and they're missing right now.

A: And they are missing right now but you know, a missing link is a link from the past, a very important link that links our realities together. Musically and artistically.

AU: How often do you come to Vegas?

A: Well, I'm here for the Punk Rock Bowling actually, what I've been told is, the actual first night is tomorrow night, but tonight is the prefirst night. And my band was the first band to play, Doctor Madd Vibe and the Missing Links, on the first Pre-Punk Rock Bowling night here in Vegas.

AU: You opened up the festival.

A: We opened it up, man, we kicked the door open, dude. Ska, Punk, Funk, Gospel. Lots of gospel.

AU: And a theremin.

A: And a theremin, too. And everybody needs gospel. For whatever kinda god they need to go help they ass out with, haha.

AU: When did you first discover the theremin as an instrument? Is that when you became Doctor Madd Vibe?

A: I was Doctor Madd Vibe way before. I discovered the theremin, probably like in 1997, in In Atlanta, Georgia, with Dallas Austin from Rowdy Records

AU: Was FishBone first and then Dr. Madd Vibe as a side project?

A: Well, FishBone was first, of course.

AU: I really enjoyed the documentary *Everyday Sunshine: The Story of Fishbone*.

A: Everybody needs everyday sunshine, dude. Just be happy that the sun is shining, right?

AU: Is that the quote?

A: And you know what, man? There's a lot of, there's a lot of imagination. Everybody has imagination in their mind they can use to release them or free them, or alter their reality. That's



where I'm coming from. Sometimes man, when things get dark, blue, and dangerous, you gotta use your imagination to make things bright for you.

AU: I think the outfit you're wearing is perfectly matched for the Fremont experience.

A: My outfit was painted by Ms. Whoop Dee Doo, and that's my daughter's logo, and her name is Cheyenne Starr Forever Moore. She also painted Chezere Brathwaite's outfit onstage tonight as well. She's a young artist.

AU: What is the message behind the Madd Vibe?

A: The message is to be forthwith. Be forward with your speech and your feelings and your passion. Y'know what I'm saying? Say what you mean! Think about what you say, and then say it. First you gotta think about it, think about it a lot too because some people don't think about what the fuck they sayin'. Like, for instance, I gotta go

pee. Now, I'm here in the middle of Fremont Street? And my bladder is fillin' up.



And so I gotta go pee, and I gotta go pee quick. And I mean it!

AU: What do you think about all the punks taking over Vegas?

A: I know nothing about that shit, but if they are taking over, make sure that there are bagels and lox and collard greens on every plate, goddammit.

AU: How do you know Angelo?

Michelle Harper: I met Angelo at Burning Man in 2010 and I'm his significant other. We've been married eight times, jumping the broom.

AU: Eight times?

MH: Eight times.

AU: You got married at Burning Man?

MH: No, just like different places on tour, and y'know, I didn't know him when I met him. He was like this weird guy, I thought he was a music nerd. Y'know like all music nerds at Burning Man. And then he's like, "You've never heard of me?" I was like, "No," and then I went to a show and there we are.

AU: At a Fishbone show or Dr. Madd Vibe?

MH: It was a Fishbone show in New York, and I said, "No, I could never date you, I'm sure you're just gonna be a lot of work," and he was like "No, I'm a nice guy," and here we are.

drmadvibe.com







Punk Rock Bowling 2017

The Venomous Pinks

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today?

Drea Doll: Drea Doll, guitar/vocals

AU: Who else is in the band and what are their mutant abilities?



DD: Jukie - drums a.k.a. Hulk Smash, Gaby - bass, a.k.a. Wolverine, Corrie - guitar, a.k.a. Black Widow.

AU: Give us a brief history of the band and it's propulsion to super-stardom as you played the main stage at Punk Rock Bowling this year.

DD: The band started out as a seed of an idea to start an all-girl punk band in Phoenix and things just blossomed from there.

AU: What is the Venomous Pinks motto?

DD: Work hard, play harder.

AU: You have been part of the Vegas Punk scene for many years now. What can you tell us bout it? Other killer Vegas bands and best venues.

DD: The Vegas punk scene has a great camaraderie, everyone is supportive and friendly. We really owe it to our label, Squidhat Records for getting us in touch with so many great bands!

AU: Do vou ever get a bowling team together?

DD: Haven't bowled yet but would like to at some

AU: Most insane thing you've ever seen during Punk Rock Bowling weekend?

DD: Iggy Pop's performance at this years festival. I mean, it's Iggy fucking Pop! Come on!

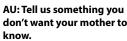
AU: What can you tell us about your latest album and videos? What record label are you on and what are they all about?

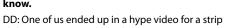
DD: Our latest album, We Do It Better is available now on Squidhat records - nationally and international in all record stores. We are pretty lucky to work with such great people at the label. They just want to help make musicians' dreams come true and want to put out great music. We love Allan and Allv!

AU: What are your songs about? What are some

out after the shows?

DD: Not really - I think we look like we would kick someone's ass half the time.





club (everyone was clothed). AU: Plans for the future?

DD: Writing a full-length this summer and touring



of your most popular tunes?

DD: We write about whatever is resonating with us at the time. This last album I went through a major break up - there were times when I didn't know if I would see the other side but I powered through it and used all my emotions in the music.

AU: Do you get a lot of man groupies hanging

as much as we can. More music videos, too!

AU: Final words for Canadian Fans.

DD: I'm sorry our president is knob, none of us voted for him.

Thevenomouspinks.com

Choking Victim

Interview with drummer Skwert Transcribed by Aeryn Shrapnel

Absolute
Underground: Who
are we talking to right now?
Skwert: Talking to Skwert.

AU: Skwert? Choking Victim? S: Yes sir.

AU: And Choking Victim recently re-formed for some reunion shows?

S: Uh, yeah, we did a few, probably about 15 now all total, something like that?

AU: Culminating at Punk Rock Bowling?

S: Yeah, biggest and best show

AU: And what's your take on Vegas? Seen any crazy shit this weekend?

S: Um, I've seen a lot of crazy shit walking down Fremont – that's a pretty insane little strip over there. Yeah, there's a lot of crazy fuckers around here. You see the zip-line on that? Apparently last year some ten-year-old was on there and just pissed on everybody as he went across. So that's some crazy shit.

AU: Crazy piss.

S: Yeah, crazy piss.

AU: Tell us the history of Choking Victim.

S: Well, it started... really started with Sasha, Scott (Sturgeon), and John Dolan. They were kinda jamming and one day I showed up for a practice – well there's a lot of other back story to it but my take on it would be I came to

a practice one day, John went to the bathroom, came back and I was on the drums, looked at me and was like, "I think you gotta play this song and these songs. I think you're the new drummer," basically and y'know.. We started from that point and...

AU: Did he move to another position in the band?

S: No, he actually moved to Taco Vendor/Taco Purveyor over at San Loco, that's where we got the sign on the wall – you know the first-aid for the choking victim and yeah. That's where the imagery and the name came from.

AU: And then you released one epic album that everyone went crazy for?

S: Actually, three 7 inches and a full-length. But yeah, the record brought us to I guess where we are now?

AU: Legend has it you recorded the album and then broke up?

S: Um, yeah, we broke up like the first or second day recording it.

AU: What happened?

S: Artistic differences.

AU: But you finished the album.

S: Yeah, we finished the record. We knew we had to do what we had to do and it was fun to record, the songs were awesome... so it's not worth throwing it away, y'know and just things happen and you reconcile and this is kinda what this is all about right now.

AU: That's really cool. And so the album came out there was no tours and people just been clamouring for more ever since?

S: Yeah and so it's a weird phenomenon actually, like, I sort

of turned my back on this band for like 15 years – didn't even think twice y'know, I have another band called Public Serpents and I did a couple other bands in between... we did In Decay, me and Ezra, who was actually in Leftöver Crack for awhile and was playing guitar for like six months in Choking Victim, then did another band called American Distress – just working on my own stuff, and then, 15 years later I kinda looked behind and was like, "Whoah! People care?" And there you go, that's kinda what happened. I didn't expect it. I had no idea, but these guys knew because they were playing Leftöver Crack the whole time and doing their thing.

AU: It was wicked to see Choking Victim on the Punk Rock Bowling Festival bill this year. A band most people never got a chance to see live, so I think it was a draw for people.

S: Yeah, I think so. I think there were some – my kid was actually in line and there was a guy going, "I'm just coming to see Choking Victim, I don't even know any of these other bands," and hearing that, you're kinda like, "You don't know who Bad Religion is, man? You don't know who The Dickies are, like?"Y'know, Fidlar, whatever, I don't really know them. Uh. Bouncing Souls, a lot of people know them, y'know? If you don't know The Bouncing Souls now, you're kinda lost in translation. The first few bands, they're newer bands, so...

AU: What was Choking Victim's message?

S: Smoke Crack, Kill Cops, Worship Satan. Pick the order you want. *chokingvictim.bandcamp.com*/

The Spits

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to are and what are you most infamous for?

Eric Wood: This is Eric Wood and I am most infamous for my voice. I have a deep guttural voice.

AU: The Spits do have a very unique voice.

EW: We do, yeah, because it's a brother band. We both have the same vocal chords, and we can hit the same pitches. It's kind of low. And so the harmonization and vibration of two of the same voices, it kind of creates something unique.

AU: When did The Spits get started, what's the brief history of the band for people in Canada who have no idea?

EW: Prehistory was early 90s, we moved out to Seattle, we were a street performing band, and we would just play out in the street. Then I got a cable access show because we couldn't get gigs so I did "Chucky and The Spits." It's on YouTube, if you look that up, Chucky and The Spits, we couldn't even get shows at that point so that was our crude beginnings, cable access.

AU: Who are all these mongoloids on the cover of your album?

EW: Well, these are, unfortunately, Trump's children.

AU: How would you describe your modus operandi for The Spits? What are you all about?

EW: We're about us. We are probably one of the most self-absorbed bands, we are in it for us and that is it. We're out to have fun and if we don't have fun, we're out, you know, we're gonna leave.

AU: It doesn't sound like anything else.

EW: We don't think about that. Honestly that's not something that we try to do, we actually want to sound like other stuff.

AU: Do you know the band Personality Crisis, they got a weird voice... They are from Canada.

EW: Personality Crisis, yeah.

AU: What's the craziest Vegas story you can tell me right now?

EW: Vegas story? There really hasn't been. This town is like one of my least favourite, actually. We've toured through here and if you want to get like only three people to your show, tour through Vegas. If you want to feel inadequate and two feet tall, tour through Vegas.

AU: What about playing on the main stage for Punk Rock Bowling? That must make you feel pretty tall.

EW: Honestly, we did it to open for Iggy and he's our hometown hero and I would have much preferred playing to a small personal 300 capacity club rather than the big stage. We played 20 minutes because we weren't feeling it and we do it for us, we don't so it for anybody else.

AU: So are you guys from Detroit originally then?

EW: Kalamazoo, Michigan. We're just from Michigan. The other side of the State. But Michigan is one, if you're from Michigan, you're from Michigan. You don't have to be from the North or the East or the West side, you're just from

Michigan.

AU: Final
words for
Canadian fans
that want to
see The Spits?



EW: Bring us to Canada! We love Canada. We're from Michigan and we have the same voice. Listen to us! Listen to me: Hot dogs. Hot dogs and pop. [sings] Oh Canada... I would bring us to Canada. We love Canada, we will



tour Canada.

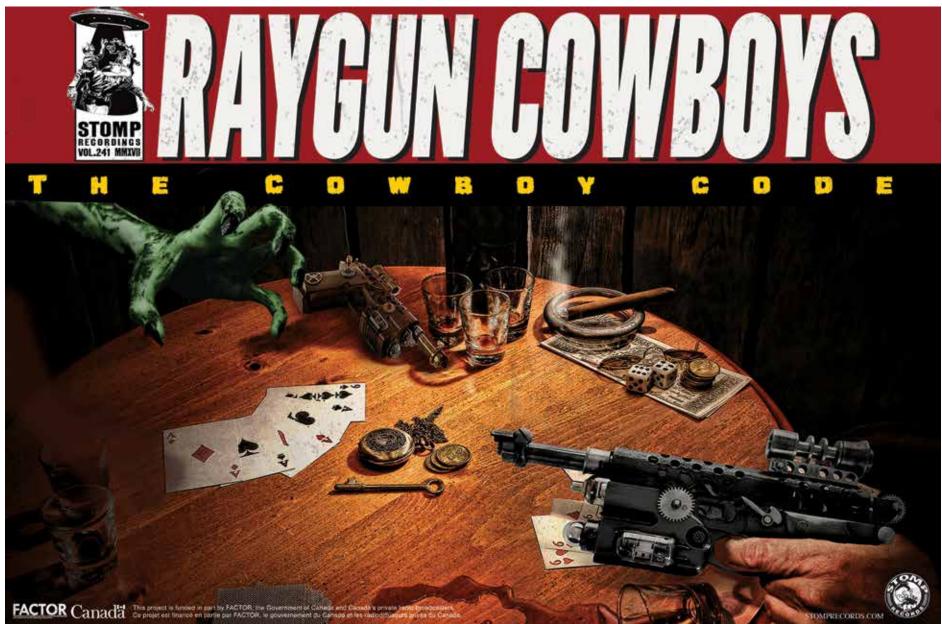
AU: You can open a hockey game and sing the national anthem.

EW: I would LOVE to...

AU: Ever ride on a zamboni? EW: You guys... fucking rule.

AU: The Spits rule, dude.

EW: We fucking love Canada! www.facebook.com/THESPITS





Cock Sparrer Interview by Esther Wurley

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Colin McFaull: Hi, I'm Colin McFaull and I'm infamous for being the singer in Cock Sparrer.

AU: Can you give us a brief history of the band?

CM: The band was formed at school in formed in 1972 when I was 16 years old. Four of the members that started the band are still present today, along with Daryl, who recently joined us 25 years ago!

AU: Did you ever think, 45 years ago, that you'd be in swim trunks and flip flops, hanging poolside playing a festival like Punk Rock Bowling? You must like it, considering this the third time you've played PRB?

CM: We never imagined that we would have the opportunity to play Punk Rock Bowling. Las Vegas was somewhere that you saw in the movies. If you count New Jersey last year, this will be our fourth PRB. We're always excited about coming back but never excited enough to be seen poolside in flip flops! Do Doctor Martens even make them?

AU: Any special surprises planned for this year's Punk Rock Bowling Festival?

CM: We've got a couple of surprises planned which I can't tell you about or they wouldn't be a surprise. Our new album Forever has just been released, so we'll be including a couple of songs from the new record in the set. Damn, I've told vou now.

AU: Music always goes away and comes back in waves. What do you think of the new wave of oi! and street punk? Any bands that you're really into right now?

CM: The scene is really healthy right now and in the UK, there are a load of young street punk bands coming through. Of those bands a couple that have made it across the pond are Booze and Glory, and Lions Law, from France. Both bands work their socks off touring, write great tunes and fully deserve the recognition they are now

AU: What prompted you to repress all your records? And why use Pirates Press?

CM: We've developed a really strong bond with Pirates Press now. They are family. When we first came out to the US in 2000, we met Skippy, who was an intern with TKO Records at the time. Fast forward seven years and Pirates Press was up and running; he and Daryl started doing some business together and the relationship was re-established. We have watched them grow over the last ten years and we are proud of their achievements and pleased that we could be part of their growth. When re-pressing the back catalogue was first discussed, it was a no-brainer as to who should get the job.

AU: You're my favourite band... Who's your favourite band and where have you drawn influences from?

CM: Thank you. I have a fairly eclectic taste in music, and like loads of bands and different types of music. When I was growing up my house was always full of the sounds of early Tamla and Stax, because I had older brothers and an older sister. So there always Aretha or Otis Redding blaring out. Or the latest Temptations 45 was on repeat. Now I don't necessarily think that that has any effect on anything that Sparrer has produced, but there are four other blokes in the band and $% \left(t\right) =\left(t\right) \left(t\right)$ I know their influences were totally different to mine. So it's probably a combination of all that plus the bands that we saw on TV and wanted to be. Bands like The Small Faces and Slade. I was just influenced by bands that had great singers. I guess if I had to pick a favourite band it would have to be The Clash. They had everything. The

look, great songs, attitude, etc.

AU: Originally vou were Cock Sparrow. How did the name change happen?

CM: I honestly can't remember when we changed it. It was just changed

to read the same way as we said it. Cock Sparrow sounds a bit posh. Which we're not!

AU: What can you tell us about the new album you just released?

CM: We released Forever a few weeks ago now, and are really proud of it. It's our first release for ten years, and we think it contains all of the typical Sparrer components - hooks, melodies and sing-alongs, but with better production. It was recorded over a four month period in late 2016/early 2017, in a number of different studios in the UK. So far it's been well received and we're looking forward to introducing some of the new songs into the live show. But the problem is what do we leave out? It's like murdering your babies.

AU: What's it like to be old?

CM: You know what? I don't know. Inside I still think I'm 19, but obviously the waistline and hairline say something different. I actually only think we'll start to get old when we stop playing.

AU: I've seen you play both festivals and bar shows. I prefer bar shows. Do you prefer one over the other? Why?

CM: Bar shows every day of the week. I like the 'up close and personal' feel that a club show has. Obviously festivals get you in front of more people but there is always that feeling of detachment with the crowd that's there in a bar. Later this year we're going to do a number of small club shows all over the UK to promote Forever, something we haven't done for a while and something that we're looking forward to.

AU: You guys have been around since 1972, and you've had a very low turnover with band mates. How do you guys keep it together so

CM: We always maintain that we're friends first and band second. Everyone has the power of veto and it's a true democracy. We don't have management or record companies telling us what to do, all of the decisions we make, both good and bad, we make ourselves. That's probably why it takes us so long to make anything happen. We have been talking about making Forever, forever. All of our families are close. The wives hang out without us being there and our kids all grew up together. One big, extended family.

AU: Are there plans for a new release or even retirement?

CM: Blimey, give us a chance, we've just released this one. Certainly no plans to retire just yet. We always said that we

would know when the time was right to step down gracefully, but as long as people want to come out and hear the songs and have a good night, then we're happy to carry on.

AU: If you could collectively re-live only one moment in your bands staggering career, what would it be?

CM: One moment that I don't think I fully appreciated at the time was when we came back to play The Astoria in London. We hadn't played live for a while and to be honest only did the gig for a laugh. We didn't think anybody would turn up. But they did. Over 2000 people from all over the world descended on The Astoria and we had a great night. I



think at the time I was only interested in trying to remember the songs and get off the stage in one piece. If we could do it again, I would try to enjoy it a bit more.

AU: Who specifically were you talking about in the song "Where Are They Now?"

CM: Julie and Tony are Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons, who were two writers for The NME, which was the UK's leading music weekly at the time. They were influential in the early days of the punk scene and in fact, Tony did a review of the first gig we did at the Roxy in London. Joe is obviously the late, great Joe Strummer and Jimmy is Jimmy

AU: Final words for Canadian fans, any plans to

CM: Not just yet. We played a couple of shows last year on the East Coast in Montreal and Toronto, which were great fun. And I think there's already an offer on the table to come back next year but we're mindful that there's more to Canada than just the East Coast. So I guess watch this space.

Pirates Press Records - piratespressrecords.com Randale Records -randaleshop.de Chase The Ace Records - chasetheacerecords.com facebook.com/cocksparreruk/





Municipal Waste

Interview by Stepan Soroka

Richmond, Virginia's Municipal Waste have been carrying the torch of classic 1980s crossover since their formation in 2000, reviving a genre and aesthetic that many thought was rotting deep underground. Much more



than a throwback band, Waste has been blazing a path that is all their own, leaving a trail of crushed cans, eviscerated eardrums and unidentifiable muck in their wake. Their sixth full length, *Slime and Punishment*, is out June 23rd via Nuclear Blast records. We caught up with guitarist Ryan Waste to talk about the new album, beer bongs and classic Canadian metal.

Absolute Underground: You're about to release your first album since 2012's Fatal Feast. Tell us a bit about it.

Ryan Waste: Well, it's called *Slime and Punishment*, you probably know that by now, and we've put a lot of time into it. We didn't spend five years writing it, but we were touring a lot. We started writing right after *Fatal Feast* and we threw a lot of songs in the trash, man, to be honest. We started

over and I think the material shines through because we put a lot of thought into it and only took the cream of the crop for the record.

AU: Who did you record with?

RW: We recorded it ourselves in Richmond and we engineered it. Phil,

our bass player, has been getting pretty good at engineering so we recorded at our practice space, did guitars at my house, vocals at another practice space and we actually sent it to Bill Metoyer, who did all the early Metal Blade stuff, out in Hollywood and he mixed it and mastered it so it's a little bit of a collaborative effort. I've become friends with Bill... I reached out to him and he was a fan of the band which was even cooler, 'cause he's got the most killer resume and that's all it took for me to sell him to the rest of the band. I'm glad we got to work with him.

AU: I know Tony, the singer, has been busy with Iron Reagan for the past couple of years. What have you been working on and how does it feel to be focusing on Municipal Waste once again?

RW: I don't know if you've heard my other band,

Bat. It's more stripped down Motorhead-style shit, I sing and play bass in that, and then it's got Felix Griffin, the original drummer from DRI, and Nick Poulos, who plays in Waste now, is on guitar. So I've been doing that, we put a record out called Wings of Chains. Just touring around, Waste was still working in that period too, we were still on the road and writing so, it's not like we really slowed down, it just took a little longer than people are used to to put a record out. But shit is on our terms, you know? It's not like we have to put one out every two years. I'm glad we made it.

AU: So this will be the first record with Nick Poulos on it?

RW: Yeah, this is the first one with him. He's a really easy going guy. He and I played together in a band called Volture which is more straightforward heavy metal stuff, and Bat, of course. So writing with him was no change for me

because we've been playing together for so long. He's more of a lead guitar player, so for the new record we have more solos, if we do harmonies we can do them live. It's a lot more full, in a sense.

AU: Do you think

there has been a resurgence in thrash throughout your 15+ year career with Municipal Waste, and do you feel at all responsible for this?

RW: That's a question that people used to ask us a lot when we were starting to get known. It wasn't an intended thing. I grew up listening to speed metal so that's what I naturally wanted to play when I was 20, when I started the band. It was cool to see a lot of other bands pop up that were similar, but a lot of them didn't last, so the test of time will tell you that we meant business and some people didn't. The coolest thing for me is seeing some of these older bands get back together and some of them have even noted us as being somewhat responsible for bringing notoriety back to them. I always represent my influences, and I've gotten to meet a lot of people that I grew up listening to and it's cool to talk to them on a peer level now. I just had lunch with the drummer of Cryptic Slaughter and it's cool just catching up, and he respects what I do, and I got to tell him how much of an influence they were on us. And I can say that for like 10, 20 other bands I've gotten to meet that were down with what we do because they knew it is legit and honest. So that's a big honour for me

AU: On that note, you guys obviously wear your influences on your sleeves. You draw heavily from these great thrash and hardcore bands of the 80s. How do you feel about people labelling you as a throwback band?

RW: I mean, I never liked that term, because we're playing something that's current. I only listen to older music, I'm not too up on what's new, so I guess I don't have many newer influences. I honestly listen to more heavy metal than anything, and I don't think we sound like a heavy metal band, I think we sound like Municipal Waste. That's why I do Voltures, so I can get my heavy metal rocks off.

AU: You're a band who releases some really unique album art, T-shirt designs and music videos. How important is imagery and presentation to Municipal Waste?

RW: Just as important as the music. I think it equally represents the band. I'm an avid record collector and when I got through a record store the sleeve is what stands out to me, that's how I got into a lot of my favourite bands. The album art has to jump out at you. Like, imagine looking at Eddy from Iron Maiden for the first time. You pick it up and you think, "Man, this has gotta be cool." The imagery has always been a major part and, man, I can't say it enough.

AU: You guys have toured all over the world. Do you consider thrash to be a universal language?

RW: Yeah, man, I guess you could say just metal in general. I mean, there are so many sub-genres now that you can't even keep up with it. I get sick of even hearing the word "thrash" because it gets thrown around so much. I mean, when I was growing up we called it speed metal. We call ourselves speed metal punk because the thrash

just gets lumped into so much shit. It's just metal, it's aggressive, if you can't speak the language you can probably still sing along to a song that you both know, if you're at a festival in Europe. So, yeah, I do think it's a universal language, and it's the best kind.

AU: You guys have a few songs about drinking. What's the gnarliest thing you've ever drank?

RW: Well, I remember going to Europe for the first time, like in 2004, and someone had brought absinthe to one of the shows. I don't even remember where we were but I was so drunk that I was just tilting it up and just chugging it. Straight absinthe, like the real stuff from Eastern Europe. And I remember blacking out and we had one of those Fear and Loathina in Las Vegas-type nights where you wake up and everything's disheveled, there's some random girl, and I barely remember what happened but I remember tasting absinthe later on that tour when I was sober, and how hardcore it was. And I couldn't believe that I was just tilting it back, just pounding it. It was like the first night of our first European tour. And I'll never forget that... I forgot a lot of it, but I'll never forget tasting it again.

AU: Do you prefer a beer bong or a shotgun?

RW: Man, we kind of wore out that beer bong thing. At one point in the early-middle career I would do one every night on stage and there would be this burp that would be coming up in the set and I'd burp right before my singing part every night. I thought, "Man, we gotta change this up," and we started giving them to the fans, and then we'd end up giving them to underage kids and being like, "That didn't work out very well." So we kind of hung up the beer bong. I can't even tell you the last time I've done it. I've shotgunned a beer this year, so... that's the classic way. I've still got it in me, man.

AU: At this stage in your career, do you find yourself having to slow down on partying in order to perform?

RW: Yeah, I was just saying this in another interview. I mean, I have slowed down in general. Drinking has been an everyday thing for me, even outside of the band, so I've started to realize that I ain't gonna be able to last if I go at that rate. Right now I haven't drank in like five days, granted I'm off tour right now, but I'm just learning to take breaks. I'm never gonna quit completely. I've said I'm gonna quit a million times and that's just kind of a lofty goal. I think just breaks are key. And I quit doing cocaine and stuff. I definitely had my time with that and I don't do that anymore. That saved a lot of hangovers. I realized that was creating a worse hangover than anything.

AU: You're coming to Canada in May. What is your favourite Canadian band?

RW: Yeah, we're playing with Razor. I got to know the Razor guys. I did this show called *Living Fast*, which was like a heavy metal talk show, and I got to have them on there. I actually got to sing a song with them once at Maryland Death Fest. I got kicked off the stage by security singing a song with Razor, doing "Behind Bars." Then they asked me up in Chicago when Bat played with them to sing the song. I gotta give it to those boys, 'cause that shit still holds up as far as speed metal goes. Voivod is up there with me too. They're a huge influence in more ways than just musically. I don't think anyone could emulate what Voivod does. I love Triumph for old hard rock stuff. Canada is chalk-full of killer bands.

AU: What's next for Municipal Waste?

RW: I don't think it hits Canada, but we're doing the Warped Tour in the US all summer, which is something new for us. Should be interesting, they haven't really had heavy bands on there before... maybe back in the day. We ain't gonna change anything that we're doing, so I think we're gonna contribute to the delinquency of a lot of minors on that one. Then we're going to the UK and playing Bloodstock right after, then Bat is coming out to the West Coast in the fall. So it's about to get real busy for us, and I think people have been waiting for it

AU: Fuck yeah, anything you want to add?

RW: Yeah, say what's up to Chad from Absolute Underground. That's my boy. Absolute Underground has always looked out for us so we really appreciate it.

facebook.com/Municipalwaste
PHOTO CREDIT: Kip Dawkins





THE REASONALES

Punk Rock Bowling **The Real McKenzies**

Interview with guitarist Jono Jak and bagpiper Aspy Luison

Transcription by Aeryn Shrapnel

Absolute Underground: When we last left our friend Jono, he was just a normal man making a simple beer.

Jono: A few lagers and a couple of IPAs, if you will.

AU: And then what changed?

J: Well, I went on the road for fuckin' three months with these hammerbags. I'm finishing my leg of the tour at Punk Rock Bowling tonight. After this I'm going home and pick up the pieces of my life while the band flies back to Copenhagen for another four months of touring. Our good companion Andrew Pederson from The Corps is gonna tap in and hop into my fuckin' Czechoslovakian army boots and kilt.

AU: I don't think you're supposed to share the kilts.

J: Oh no no, he's got his own kilt. It was a metaphor.

AU: Another man's sporran is very personal.

J: Haha, that's right, it's the Sporran Identity. Sporran on the fourth of July. Sporran to run?

AU: Is that the name of the next album?

J: Children of the Sporran is another good one.

reed. Tell me about the hard reed, in the hot sun.

A: Yeah, the reeds for the pipes, with humidity in this hot, change too much. So with humidity, it's like high. So with this hot, I try for a hard reed.





Bad. The problem was the fucking hot fucking sun on top dries. It was really hard because with the hard reed, you may blow too much, push too much of the bag.

AU: You probably almost passed out. You were pushin' the bag too hard, dude.

A: Too much, too much.

AU: Back to you Jono. The Real McKenzies is Paul McKenzie's vision that will never end, and you are now a part of it. How does it feel?

J: It's great because, it's just kind of a new spin on the band. There are two new guitarists, a new drummer, Paul's always been a staple, of course... but with the new album, with the 25th anniversary, it was like, instead of looking back, it's like, let's look forward as well.

AU: Are you stoked on any bands playing Punk Rock

Bowling this weekend?

J: It was great to see Bouncing Souls. Bad Religion. The older I get, the more I like punk rock bands that can formulate and write good



AU: Sporran to be Wild?

J: Sporran to be Wild – it's actually my autobiography title.

AU: Tell us about the new album.

J: I put my fingers on the new album called Two Devils Will Talk, it was actually written by Dan Garrison, he's just a Fat Wreck Chords aficionado, he wrote 90% of the songs, and he was so gracious to let me play guitar on that album too, so I got to do the bagpipe leads with Aspy, our Galician piper, over here.

AU: You're a piper too? You pick a pack a pepper piper?

J: No, it's an amazing thing – I've been playing guitar for 25 years, but following a bagpipe lead, it's like something they can't teach you at Nelson's Music or Temple

Trend. It's a thing you gotta learn on the road with a Galician piper.

AU: Galician, where's it from, a Gaelic country?

J: Why don't you ask him?

AU: Who are we talking to here? Where are you from?

Aspy: Aspy from Northwest to Spain J: Yeah it's like a little country onto itself, really, isn't it?

A: It's a Celtic nation. You no speak Spanish? **AU: No habla espanol, senor! Mucho hard**



punk rock songs, y'know?

AU: And then there's The Real McKenzies.

J: And then there's us, which is just fucking getting wasted and fuckin' showing our dongs to everyone. It's a real multi-dong affair, we spin around, we show our asses, we show our dongs, and we play rock'n'roll.

AU: Windmill. Dutch rudder!

J: Haha, The Scottish windmill, if you will. www.realmckenzies.com





AU: I thought you were a big part of that movie.

RS: Yeah, it's pretty great. But you know, the thing is that was kind of Wes Orshoski's take on the Damned, not necessarily mine. He makes the kind of film that he thinks his distributors will want and people will pay money to see. The movie was OK but its not my version of events, you know?

AU: Punk Rock Bowling. Are you bowling this year?

RS: No, I'm not sadly. I did try to get a team together this year but didn't have enough time to do it.

AU: You can come bowl on our team.

RS: I wouldn't be allowed now.

Punk Rock Bowling

The Mutants

Interview with drummer Rat Scabies Transcribed by Trevor Lawrence Reid

Absolute Underground: Where are we? Who are we talking with? And what are you most famous for?

Rat Scabies: Fuck... I'm Rat Scabies, I'm in Las Vegas, and I have no idea why I'm famous at all.

AU: Well they just made a documentary about you being the drummer in The Damned.

RS: Yeah. Kind of, I guess.

AU: They may disqualify us but we'll take one for the team.

RS: Yeah, 'cause I know they are very touchy about that. Cause there's money involved so they get really cagey, don't they? No, I thank you for the offer, that's very generous of you. If didn't think people would be upset I probably would. I'm also a shitty bowler. You really don't want me on your team.

AU: This band tonight, you're drumming for The Mutants. What are The Mutants all about?

RS: I've been working with them for a few years. We've done three and a half albums. We're kind of territorial. The first album we did was all about

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sort of punk and ska in London, and the English kind of music scene. And then the second one we did, we kind of moved it to Japan. So we had like Guitar Wolf, the 5, 6, 7, 8's, The Let's Go's, a bunch of people, you know. 'Cause we're an unknown band so it helps get the fans of the individual artists that are on the record to buy it. Then the

last one was the desert album, with guys like Dave Catching and Chris Goss on it. We're really just stealing other people's audiences.

AU: What do you like the best about Vegas?

RS: Well you know what, I think Vegas, I think it's kind of a crock of shit generally. If I'm honest, I can't stand it.

AU: It's so artificial.

RS: Well, it's not only that. It's kind of I don't find the entertainment value very entertaining. But at the same time I totally understand how it works and why its here. Actually what I really like is I people watch. You get this absolute mix of everything wandering up and down Fremont street. And you just always wonder what their day jobs are, you know? Cause people don't stay in town for longer than a few days. Everyone's got this "I'm going to be dead by Sunday night! Let's spend every penny, let's drink every drop. What else can I do? [makes sniffing noise] And I've already done all that."

AU: So any other bands you're in other than the Mutants?

RS: I've been playing drums in the theatre with an actress called Jane Horrocks who everybody probably knows best as Bubble from the show Absolutely Fabulous. That's what most people know her from but she's also got a great singing voice. She was brought up in the whole Manchester northern music scene so we did this 12 week show at the Young Vic in



London. So, like Rat Scabies in a West End musical. Who would have ever thought it. So I've been doing that, I've been doing the mutants, I've been working with a band from California called Professor and the Madmen. I kind of dig what they're doing.

AU: You're a hired gun.

RS: Drum whore is probably the easiest way of putting it.

AU: Final words for the Canadian fans?

RS: Brush up on your log cabin building. Well, you know what? I think it's quite amazing that anyone even still knows who I am after all this time so anybody out there who was part of the scene then, or is around now, and remembers or is someone who's just found it. I'm grateful for every single one of them.

AU: I know for a fact when my friend, Tyler, looked over and realized he was bowling against Rat Scabies a few years, that like made his life.

RS: It makes your opponent that much easier to beat if they are easily intimated.

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Punk Rock Bowling Lion's Law

Interview with guitarist Louis Démence transcribed by Aeryn Shrapnel

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to?

L: Louis, the guitar player of Lions Law.

AU: This is a French hardcore street skinhead band?

L: Yeah , we all come from the punk/skinhead scene and we just wanted to make a band like with punk rock and hardcore and Oi! influence. So we started Lion's Law like five years ago and here we are in Vegas, man – it's crazy!

AU: Is this the height of your career so far – **Punk Rock Bowling?**

L: Yeah, it's crazy, I would have never thought it

would be possible. When we started the band, you know? I'm writing a song in my bedroom and now I'm fucking here.

AU: What just happened, you played the pool party?

L: Yeah, the pool party! It's the first time I've played a place like that, it was unexpected, and it was a lot of fun.

AU: Was there a mosh pit in the pool?

L: Yeah man! People were going crazy there. I've never seen that, so it's a good experience.

AU: And you guys are playing a show tomorrow at the main festival stage?

L: That's right we play at like 4:20pm?

AU: 4:20?

L: Yeah, 4:20.

AU: Smoke weed!

L: Haha, yeah man, yeah I'll do that. That's the right time.

AU: The right time.

L: Yeah, you now how it is. It's the first time for us so we don't know what's gonna happen tomorrow, when we're gonna be on stage, but for sure it's an honour for us to be there.

AU: Were you guys were getting cooked by the sun playing that show today?

L: Haha, some of us, like Victor is getting red because of the sun, man. He can't take it. But

yeah, we're good, it's like holidays, having fun, sun, punk rock.

AU: Have you seen any wild Vegas things happen yet?

L: We just arrived like before playing the pool party, so I'm waiting to see how it's gonna be.

AU: Iggy Pop was last night.

I: Yeah, how was it? Good? The thing is that I've never seen him play but I wish I could but we were playing a show in Los Angeles yesterday so we didn't see.

AU: Does Cocksparrer mean more to you?

L: Yeah, of course, it means more, but like, Cocksparrer we used to play with them in Europe a lot. We always liked the show, we always love it. They're fucking good all the time, but Iggy Pop was like original, not common.

AU: What's the hardcore music scene like in Paris?

L: Small but intense. I would say that: small but

intense. Like, when you do an Oi show or a punk show you can reach like 200 people, that's all, but people are like motivated and full of energy. We are trying to make a lot of shows, there are not a lot of venues, that's the problem. It gets expensive really quickly

AU: What are the good venues?

L: Actually, there are like two. It's called La Mécanique Ondulatoire, so if you guys are going to Paris, you have to check out this bar - it's really good, it's like a rock'n'roll bar. And then there's Le Gibus, which is a venue in the center of Paris too. and that's a little bit bigger, and that's good.

AU: What does Montreal mean to you?

L: It means fun to us! We played Montreal last year we played Montreal? And I played there before with Komintern Sect. So we are really friends with the auv from The Prowlers there.

AU: You need to come all the way to the West Coast.

L: Where are you living?

AU: Victoria, British Columbia, on the West Coast, Canada.

L: Oh, ok. Yeah, we would like to go to Vancouver but it's like really far from Montreal, right?

AU: Yeah, it's a whole country in between.

L: But we have to figure out, maybe the next time we'll come on the West Coast.

AU: Final words?

L: If you want some good street punk with balls and melodies, then check us out. And for the ones already listening to us, thank you for the support. And thanks to you for the interview.

AU: La Loi Du Lion, Respectez!

www.facebook.com/lionslawparis



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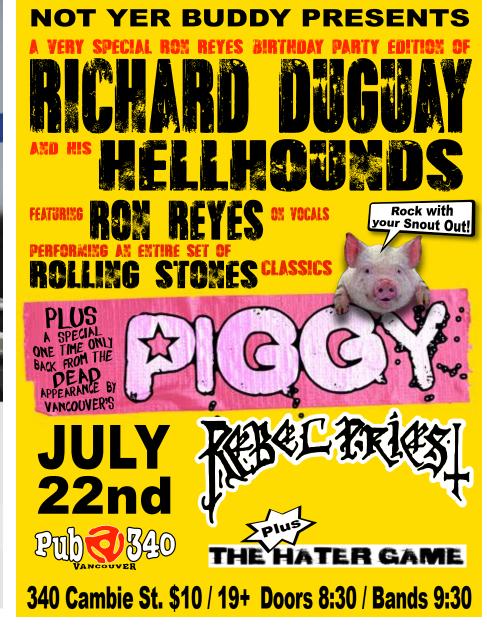
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Absolute Album Reviews

Karkaos - Children of the Void Independent

The east coast equivalent of Unleash the Archers, these guys and girls don't wear the leather in vain, for they are metal with a capital M. Their melodic approach isn't weakened for the sake of capturing the interest of radio. They clearly want you to sing along as they take your head off with blasting instrumental supremacy like the insanity that flames forth on the track"Skymaster."

"Kolossos" has that sky-turns-ablood-red feel to it, as dissonant guitars coil around the alternating cave troll screams and howling banshee calls from the storm. This album is expertly played by seasoned musicians with impressive skills all their own, and if that wasn't enough, they've invited some stellar guests to join them on the full-on metal journey, people such as Lindsay Schoolcraft from Cradle of Filth and Morgan Lander from Kittie.

All these songs are evenly awesome, which is a rarity nowadays. The title track will rock you like a cradle set up in the same room as that creepy girl creature in the movie The Grudae, with its whimsical lullaby melodies and surprise guttural growls.

-Dan Potter

Morass of Molasses - These Paths HeviSike

Self described as "Swamp Master Generals..." this is a great way of explaining these three guys' musical and life ethic. The seething explosive stoner riffs are straight out of the nastiest bog the Deep South has to offer. Imagine a cult of berserkers so stoned that in trying to cover some Black Label Society they end up sounding like a vicious Celtic Frost-inspired nightmare, and you will get the gist of the opening track, "My Leviathan." Wailing bluesy guitars continue on through "So They Walk," which has an early grunge inspired chorus. There is so much wah-drenched guitar on this album, you'd be forgiven for thinking a young Zakk Wylde was an unnamed guest. "Centralia" busts loose with a nightmarish ZZ Top-like groove and has a whispered chorus that comes off sounding like a creature from the flaming pit of which this song is in ode to

Wastelands and abandoned dys topias is where metal breeds. This offspring is a fuzzy, doomed beast bound to spread the end times wherever it lurks.

-Dan Potter

Radio Free Universe - Casa Del Diablo

Jetpack Records

Mid-tempo bluesy grooves start this old-school hard rock release with "American Gun." The sassy guitar riffs are straight out of the 70s and easily get the party started right. The next track, "Disclosure," comes off as a nice Jack White jam, and it goes much further than that, with some amped-up chorus singing and doubled-up guitar blitzkriegs straight from the highlight reel of Classic Rock Gold compilations.

The radio doesn't traffic in such classic rip-roaring fun anymore, which is a shame, but this group has clearly got the greatest stash of classic rock in town. They have perfected the ominous lurch of Sabbath, and still have room for that crooked dreamy Zeppelin sound. "Six" has an awesome Slashmeets-The Black Crows thunder stomp that is bound to get the bar swinging, which makes it the standout track for sure, keeping the party going into after hours. With that classic modern feel, these guys are not only keeping the flame of the greats alive; they are forging their own stadiumbound path via honest songcraft and a true need to rock, just like Crobot or Monster Truck

-Dan Potter

The Thirteenth Sun - Stardust **Aural Music**

Downcast melodies and haunting atmospheric transitions push the track "Universus" along like some twisted alien probe searching for a new planet to call home. The foreboding elements of Ghost meet the unlikely co-conspirators in instrumentalist juggernaut Dream Theater, whilst sharing the sheer brawn of Mastodon. It's a great mix of metal to call your offspring, and these guys don't disappoint by wimping out via stealing without improving.

The fact that this band hails from Transylvania makes perfect sense when one considers the harmonized vocals that seem to come straight from the crypt of Dracula "Universe is Burning" is a scorcher in the style of Central European black metal, with blazing guitars and phoenix-rising orchestral backdrops that add even more shade to the darkness.

A very dynamic release like this one is a real treat to take in, as all the twists and turns brought on by the unique fusing together of darkened elements keeps the story interesting until the very end.

-Dan Potter

This Gun For Hire - Something A Little More Sinister Independent

The opening track, "Infection," is a gritty take on melody-infused young peoples' metal. The entire album has that emotional teenager feel to it, with elements of angst and betrayal initiated sadness. It's not all weepy though, as the most prominent feature is the primordial . ape scream that really could scare down a charging gorilla.

The guitars and backbeat are supercharged with energy that shows they have the goods to stand on the same stage as Alexisonfire or Thrice. "Alligator Death Roll" lets the heads roll with its slapback melodic-meets-dissonance persona. This band loves short clean breakdowns that lead into more bludgeoning staccato rhythms and this tendency comes alive on this centrally located track. Epic emotions lift this release into complete breakdown territory as each track keeps building the visceral tension until you are ready to call it quits. But they know the sweet melodies will keep bringing vou back for more.

-Dan Potter

Woodhawk - Beyond the Sun Independent

With Alice In Chains-like melodies this Calgary-based riff-rock group has come to soothe you with groovy anthems and great intriguing lyrics, "The High Priest" kicks off with an awesome Birmingham sludge riff and journeys all the way into a Hammond B3 Organ-soaked black hole. Lyrically, these guys are into some serious heavy metal cosplay as tails of desert treks and dark religious orders are their

There are lots of epic quiet elements, so it's not all a game of Sabbathian bludgeon fact they definitely have that trippy "Planet Caravan" vibe down also. "Magnetic North" and the instrumental "Foresee the Future" are spine tingling good in that subdued on the bayou sort of way. The last track "Chrononaut" is a great rocking anthem that has a Thin Lizzy swaggering strut to it, plus a true stoner breakdown with creepy swelling organs and layered guitars.

This band sure knows their classic rock, from which they strip the useful elements and splice them with some sweeter modern rock stylings, making this release a memorable and complex outing -Dan Potter

Integrity – Howling, For The Nightmare Shall Consume Relapse Records

An eighty-three second barrage of howling guitars and throaty vocal screaming the words, "FALLEN TO DESTROY," is how Cleveland via Belguim's Integrity welcomes you to their first album in four years, and their first album for the mighty Re lapse Records. What unfolds after those first eighty-three seconds is singer Dwid Hellion's latest, darkest vision, and one of the most anticipated and eclectic as well. This album is quite possibly the band's most complete work, clearly draw ing from not only their past works but very heavily from genres far outside of anything even remotely associated with punk, hardcore, or metal. Working in league with guitarist/musician Dominic Romeo of A389 Records, Dwid has put together something that will draw some fans in, and push others out, but that has always been the way of the walk for a band that was always too much of one thing and not enough of the other to fit in to any real scene; that's where they seem to be most content. 'Blood Sermon' is the first full song on the album, and for a minute you're al-most convinced that the duo have adopted a blackened hardcore sound, but then there's a little dbeat thrown in to confuse you, and double tapping solos thrown in on top of that, and that pretty much sets the pace and pentameter for the rest of the album. Loosely speaking, there is a stripped-down almost classic 'heavy metal' feel to a lot of the album; galloping, harmonized guitars on top of double bass, and very obvious elements of doom. There's still that very distinct Systems/Humanity-era 'Melnick brothers' sound that is often imitated but never emulated it's the one thing that has carried through to every Integrity record, and despite the fact that they are all their own entities, there's always been that one sonic commonality. 'String Up My Teeth' is the stand out, stand-alone track that really caught me off guard; it somehow manages to flawlessly combine falsetto and Hellion's growling with soulful Motown vocals (complete with tambourine accompaniment) into an otherwise fairly basic hard rock song. It's patently clear that the duo have been all over the map with their at-home listening, with Hellion recently stating that he no longer listens to new music and that if he wants to hear new music he'll make it himself. There is very little that could be classified as 'punk' or 'hardcore' on this record, but it's still there lurking in the background and every so often it rears its head ("Burning Beneath the Devil's Cross") and reminds you that Integrity do as they please but never aim to please, and frankly, that's punk as fuck.

-Ted Wilson

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Absolute Live Reviews

Testament, Sepultura, Prong Commodore Ballroom, Vancouve 10 May 2017

Sold-out metal on a weekday... U2 making waves in town, this crew did not care. Prong took the venue first; delivered some groovy beats, dwarfed by the covered drum kits in waiting. The crowd response was good but muted; the sound was quiet, with the PA and lighting being held in reserve for the larger acts. Sepultura was up next, touring latest effort *Machine Messiah* they dropped the classic "Inner Self" in the mix to satisfy the original fans in attendance. New songs fit the current band lineup better; old material craves a second guitar to cover rhythm on the solo sections. Closing out on "Roots Bloody Roots," they still deliver! Testament was up next; the stage got darker and larger... and you can tell why they held the headlining spot over the other two bands of similar vintage. Unbelievable shred solos, Gene Hoglan on the kit making it all look easy, Chuck Billy preaching the message on the mike! New material from Brotherhood of the Snake alongside OG thrash hits "Into The Pit," covered the whole career of the band. Great times were had by all, get their new record ASAP for

- Frik Lindholm

Modified Ghost Festival Review

maximum metal massacre.

By Stepan Soroka and Willow Gambera

Modified Ghost Fest Night 1 – Thursday, May 25th

6pm is early for a metal show to start. Granted, there were seven bands on the bill, but for someone who works a day job in the suburbs, getting downtown for starting was iust not realistic. Resigned to being late, I dawdled at home for a few minutes (i.e. a few vodka shots) before hopping on the 14 and cruising down Hastings Street to Vancouver's entertainment district. Two of the bands on the bill, Visceral Disgorge from Baltimore and death metal legends Exhumed from San Jose ended up not making it, the former due to a van break-down and the latter due to border issues Consequently, the show started later than planned and I only missed the opener, Dallas, Texas's Seeker. I heard they were really good. Sorry guys. Up next was Calgary's Wake, who faked me out with a short and slow (and sweet) doomy opening song before blasting into a full set of fast death metal with a healthy dose of grind. Wake delivered a no-bullshit set of heavy-as-fuck music, and evto the dynamic equally. Particularly impressive was the drummer, who played front stage centre, due to another kit being set up behind him. He killed it. Up next were locals Archspire, who I'd seen a few times over the years, the last time at Arm strong Metal Festival. Other than their insane musicianship and fast, technical song composition my most vivid memory was singer Oli Peters exposing his tattooed ballsack to the audience. This time no sacks were released, as Oli explained that several

band members had parents in the crowd. Very respectable. The band was just as mind-bendingly techni cal as I remember, and although Oli's voice was noticeably hoarse from heavy touring, his rapid-fire vocal delivery was impressive as always. l escaped for a beer on a park bench underneath a lovely gothic church before returning for Hobart, Australia's Psycroptic. I'd heard some really good things about the band and they did not disappoint. It was their first time playing Vancouver and they were visibly stoked to be bringing their own brand of technical death metal all the way from down under. Vocalist Jason Peppiatt got the crowd worked into a frenzy, n no small part because he and the rest of the band were clearly going for it as hard as they could. A musical performance is a give-take relationship with the audience - pour energy into the crowd and you will get it back, and this was a perfect example. For me Psycroptic was the highlight of the night, despite death metal heavyweights Dying Fetus taking the stage next. That's not to say that Dying Fetus didn't absolutely crush –they did – it's just that they didn't have to work for it as hard as Psycroptic. That being said, the crowd went absolutely nuts for Dying Fetus, and the three-piece delivered a barrage of punishing death metal that absolutely satisfied mine and seemingly everyone's appetite for brutality. I can't say that there was a low point at anytime in the evening – all of the bands brought it, and this was as solid a kick-off to the four-night Modified Ghost Festival as anyone could expect.

Modified Ghost Fest Night 2 -Friday, May 26th

Despite the gorgeous sunny day outside, the Rickshaw was nearly packed at 7pm, which speaks volumes about the strength of the lineup. Solid performances from locals Koma and Bushwhacker warmed the crowd up in no time followed by Portland's Witch Mountain. Boasting a new frontwoman since their last visit, Witch Mountain had the crowd enthralled Kayla Dixon gave a passionate and mesmerizing vocal performance, her voice meshing perfectly with the driving, groovy basslines and fuzzy guitar tone. Next up, Black Wizard took the stage. Fresh from a tour with Royal Thunder and about to embark again with Weedeater, these gents were right on the money throwing down a tight and enter taining performance, even though it was their first with stand-in bassist Justin Hagberg of 3 Inches of Blood. After that, it was time for Acid King, a crowd favourite... their droning, fuzzy sound was a stark contrast to the previous bands, but it was no less enjoyable, as they played the soundtrack to many of the audience high school years. Next up, Red Fang took the stage and, as always, put on a stellar show. Though they have a relatively new album, Only Ghosts on the market, they played many older favourites, which went over exceedingly well with the crowd. Their playing was tight, fun to watch, and a good reminder that there is a reason the band has done so well lately - they sound just as good live as on their recordings. Finally, the moment most people in the crowd had been waiting for... Candlemass. Indeed, looking around, most people seemed to be in something of a religious trance. Their set was everything we could have wanted

and more, they played the hits and

played them well, with the wicked sound and excellent showmanship that has seen them remain relevant and enthralling for so many years.

Modified Ghost Fest Night 3 – Saturday, May 27th

Sadly I missed Tyrants Blood, arriving iust in time for Anciients, who put on a ripping set, including som tracks from their new album, Voice of the Void, which has been getting a great reception. Kenny Cook is a veritable guitar god, and puts most other shredders to shame with his casually ripping leads. Next up was Mantar, a two-man grind band that started off with some technical difficulties but ended up playing a very intense set that saw the guitarist/ vocalist all over the stage, while the drummer, with his kit right up in front of the audience, put on an insane performance. Heavy hitting, drenched in fog and alien shrieks, Mantar's set was otherworldly and absorbing. Primitive Man was next up, a Vancouver favourite, with a heavy-as-fuck set full of doomy, bass drum-laden pummelling and guttural vocals. Nails took the stage next, in a much-anticipated performance – they haven't played Vancouver forever. Their set was exactly what we all hoped; vicious, precise, deafening, thrashy hardcore. The crowd went wild, and kept the energy up for Razor, though their set contrasted drastically with the insanity of Nails. Seasoned Canadian veterans, Razor did not disappoint – their set was tight and energetic, and had most people in the crowd singing along. Finally it was time for Municipal Waste, and neither the heat, nor several straight days of partying could tame that circle pit. I watched, exhausted. from the balcony as Municipal Waste whipped the crowd into a

frenzy of moshing, surfing, screaming and thrashing. Their shout-able choruses and pure animal energy on stage were impossible to resist; Tony passed the mic down through the crowd, compelling everyone to sing along: "Municipal Waste is gonna fuck you up! Municipal Waste is gonna fuck you up!"

Ladies and gentlemen, Municipal Waste did exactly that. Everyone rolled out of the Rickshaw sweaty, grinning, bruised, and most definitely fucked up.

Modified Ghost Fest Night 4 – Sunday, May 28th

This show was on a Sunday, so I had no real excuse to be late. It was also the night I was anticipating the most, since NYHC legends the Cro-Mags were playing a set in celebration of the 30th anniversary of their masterpiece album Age of Quarrel. Since I didn't have a media pass for Saturday night's show, I decided to go camping instead, which was a blast. We skated a bowl in the woods, drank a thousand beers and swam

in an ice cold mountain creek. Epic times. I even left early in the day on Sunday to make sure I made it back to town with plenty of time to see the show. Unfortunately, an accident on the highway ground traffic to a halt for several hours, and by the time I dropped off the homies, anchored my car and made it to the Rickshaw the Cro-Mags were just starting their encore. I had resigned to missing the rest of the bands, but I didn't think the Cro-Mags would be done by 11pm. Oh well. They played 'We Gotta Know" and "Hard Times," and I raged as hard as I could for the five minutes I got with one of my favourite bands in the world. Can't win em all. Those two songs sounded fucking awesome.

www.modifiedghost.com

LAKE TOWN ROCK FESTIVAL May 19 – 21, 2017 Cowichan Valley, BC

It looked like the start of a beauty weekend as my brother and I arrived to the site of the Lake Town Rock Festival midday Friday. The Haut Foundation was ready for some sun, suds, and classic Canadian rock. We found our campsite on Jim Morrison Road. All the camparound roads had been named after dead rock stars. Patsy, Prince, Cocker, Williams Sr, etc. set up camp and go for a stroll to check out the set up. We get our three wristbands, over 19. campers, and Pit Pass then enter the grounds. We were the only ones besides crew/staff in the main stage so we grabbed some photos. Pretty cool seeing it empty then full later. Grabbed a snack from the Ruby booth then back to the camp to enjoy a cool drink. Hung out, met other campers, then off to Sam Roberts. They played a great set, high energy and gave the fans the hits they wanted. "Don't Walk Away Eileen had everyone grooving. Í went back to the campground and my bro went to check out the Hip Replace ments on the second stage.

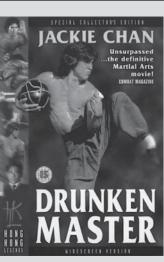
Day Two. Rise and shine. Hit Lake Cowichan for supplies then back to campground. While checking out some shiny classic cars I find the Ira man arriving. Get him back to camp, pitch a tent, lay a mattress, give him a drink, done. Robdog shows up and we get psyched up for Prism. THEY ROCKED, Spaceship Superstar had us hopping instantly. Ira had his record sleeves of all the bands to be signed. With some Robdog help the first cover was signed from the stage with the crowd yelling support. Young and Restless sent me back to Grade 7, listening to KTel vinyl hits records. The lead singer just gave it all. Back to camp for refreshment. Trooper gave us the "Boys in the Bright White Sports Car" to start the show. Their lead guitarist had over come illness and wasn't supposed to play but you can't keep rockers down. They weren't 3's dressed as 9's. They raised hell and gave us a great finish with an all star jam of Prism, Trooper, and the Wild. Grabbed some tacos for dinner from a food truck. Not bad for 11 bucks. Mike Reno blasted on stage in a bizarre tank top custom made for chunky old rockers that my slightly addled brain could not comprehend.

Absolute Film Reviews

Drunken Master Eureka! Entertainment

Director Yuen Woo-Ping might be known for his action sequences in such films as The Matrix or Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon but his most morable film would have to be Drunken Master (1978) staring Jackie Chan. This film would mately spring both Yuen Woo-Ping and Jackie Chan into instant stardom. Jackie would eventually

make massively successful films over in North America and Yuen would get the chance to work on big films like Kill Bill and Kung Fu Hustle. But none of these films have the unique style



or humor that Drunken Master possess. Jackie Chan stars as the legendary Chinese folk hero Wong Fei-Hung, who is studying martial arts school, Wona Fei-Hung is brash and doesn't like to follow the rules and in doing so he gets disowned by his father

leave the school and train with master Su Hua Chi. Su Hau Chi played by Yuen Woo-Ping's real life father Yuen Siu-Tien, takes on the task of training Jackie Chan's character in kung fu but also teaching him humility. This is a

very interesting take on the Wong Fei-Hung character, who has appeared in many Chinese action films like *Once* Upon A Time In China and Iron Monkey. This version of the character is very young, wild and doesn't really follow orders. It's quite a change from his characterization in most other films where he is the humble, quiet man working to help his people rise from oppression. This younger version shows a side of Wong Fei-Hung that most people, at this point in 1978, hadn't really seen before. This film also introduced the world to Jackie Chan's amazing ability to come up with completely original fighting styles. Like the title suggests this film uses the "Drunken style" of fighting. This style of kung fu was made up, while filming, by Jackie himself. He would practice in the mirror at night after the rest of the crew had gone to bed, coming up with poses and moves that he would then use in the scenes he was filming the next day. In the film, master Su, or Beggar So as he's called, teaches Wong Fei-Hung his drunken style so that Wong car defeat an assassin who's out to kill his father. Beggar So is a frail, old man who seems very unimposing until he gets a jug full of wine in him. The wine gives Beggar So unbelievable abilities that make him virtually unstoppable. He then passes along this knowledge to Wong Fei-Hung but only after tormenting the young man with months and months or rigorous training. Wong Fei-Hung must master all 8 of the drunken styles if he's to overcome his enemy and avenge his father. One of the best parts about *Drunker* Master is that it never lets up! The film is just one action sequence followed by another until the final battle at the end. Jackie has to fight opponent after opponent until he finally proves himself worthly of the title "drunken master". Jackie's abilities along with /uen Woo-Ping's directing style makes this an outrageous action romp that needs to be seen to be believed.

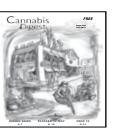
Drunken Master is a great example of how action, kung fu and comedy can work to make a film a huge success And this film wasn't only successful in China, it was seen over in North America and helped pave the way for both Jackie Chan and Yuen Woo-Ping. Drunken Master is one of the greatest kung fu films ever made and Eureka! Entertainment has given this film the beautful release it deserves.

- Cody No Teeth

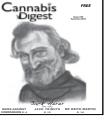
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Loverboy, a staple of my elementary school soundtrack, was why I was there. They were a little weak in the middle but grabbed everyone back with "Lovin Every Minute of It." The weather was killer, with lots of sun, lots of shade to hide in and a lovely breeze. Nobody was working this weekend, just rocking. There was cow flops everywhere, turkey vul tures looking for dead careers, some awesome rock shirts to buy, few kids, no dogs, very few drunks, and a lot of happy people politely enjoy-ing the show. We looked for the Sun Fest Diamond but only found Ira's interpretation.

Day 3. Up and about early, hit Lake Cowichan for May Day in the park. Scored salad, hotdogs, corn on the cob, juice, chip and salsa, and homemade pickles for a donation. Best deal all weekend. Robdog had vanished and we were back to the Haut Foundation and Ira. Time for the Headpins. With a great new lead singer they gave the early afternoon a awesome start. Tight tunes and tight pants. Streetheart had me remembering all the words to "One More Time," and all the ladies singing "What Kind Of Love Is This." Kenny Shields is in his seventies and his voice still hits those notes. These bands still have it! So happy to be with my bro Derek and Ira having a wicked time. Campground for fuelling up for Honeymoon Suite. These guys know how to keep the crowd alive. They had everyone singing along to all the hits you forgot where theirs. "Love Changes Everything" had me scoping the ue and seeing a crowd that was having a blast.

Sadly I missed Glass Tiger as the weekend caught up with me and rising from my comfy chair became difficult. I heard them from afar, and heard they were great.

It was a great birthday weekend for me thanks to my brother... Ira's non stop comedy stylings were a high light. People were pleasant, helpful, and happy. In the words of those

great hosers, it was beauty way to go Canada!

Brian Haut aka Happy Brian

Punk Rock Bowling Las Vegas, May 26-29



Left the Island Thursday morning, got to Vegas; getting off the plane, a wall of heat hits you as the desert instantly starts sucking you dry. The Vegas contact person picked me up, and I unwittingly found out I was on a \$4,000 drug run. They dropped me off at the casino for a drink while they handled their business, before dropping me off at my hotel. Checked in, up to the room to drop my bags, then it was off the Fremont Country Club to see The Sonics. Went out the back of the club in search of autographs and found an authentic Mexican food truck, Drunk off \$3 PBRs, I managed to stumble back to the hotel around 4 am.

I woke up late Friday morning a little rough from the night before. Had a toke, then rolled down to get some fuel in me for the day of shenanigans ahead. Toured the strip to see the sites as it was my first time in Vegas and stopped into 11th St. Records to search for new and used vinyl.

The night brought shows including; The Weirdos and Television, along with more \$3 PBRs at the Bunkhouse

Saloon. This time I got back nice at early... At 5 am.

With four hours of sleep under my belt. zombied towards the Golden Nugget to meet the shuttles for bowling. Hung over with only some coffee for breakfast, the drinking was soon to begin. Our bowling 'The Absolute Underground Zoners," made up of myself, Ira Hunter, Jason

Lamb and Scott Dunlop, We lost horribly in a three-game set but were all winners after five buckets of beer. After bowling the main venue opened; got my first wrist band on and then was stopped by security. Cole, (the white shirt of security) hooked me up with an all access wrist band. After seeing a few of the bands, the lack of water and copious amounts of alcohol put me down for

Sunday I woke up groggy, somehow having made it back to the hotel the previous night. I felt like warmed over death but this was no time for weakness, for there were pool parties to be had! I made my way to the Golden Spike. With an egg rally and start the day drinking. A three-hour line up made this pool

party look like a mirage Said, "Fuck it," and started heading back towards the hotel, only to run into the headlining band of the party: The Varukers, They had a "fuck the rules" sorta attitude and ended up sneaking me in backstage with their entourage. I watched Lion's Law, who whipped the crowd into a frenzy before the main act hit the stage. Several PBRs later, it was time to head to the main venue for day number two. Bands that played were The Real McKenzies, The Bouncing Souls and Bad Religion, to name a few. Too exhausted and too drunk, I somehow once again made it back

to my hotel. Monday I was hung over as shit. Sun and PBR on day five was taking its toll on me. I couldn't do the pool party today. Saved my energy and rallied that night for the main event. Decided to take it easy and hit up the casino to try my luck, only to come up short. Made it to the venue in time for The Adicts. The frontman came out looking like Elvis in his most flash of costumes



High energy, incredible stage show, the punk version of glitz and glam. Pennywise hit the sage after, with accompanying guitarist Greg Hetson (Circle Jerks, Bad Religion). Powering through hits and covers with Fat Mike of NOFX who joined in, playing the stage hog. Closing with the classic Bro Hymm, filling the stage with bands and fans as everyone sang along. A bikini clad effigy of Donald Trump was brought out on stage to be smashed to pieces with bats. 45 year vets, Cock Sparrer, with a newly released album, had more energy than teenage fan girls. Rocking out hit after hit, that had

everyone on their feet and cheering for more.

Coming full circle, I headed to the Fremont to spend my last night. There was punk rock karaoke, that was backed by a live band featuring members of groups that had played the festival. Form there to the Beauty Bar, where Death By Stereo happened to be playing. Was able to sneak in the last 20 minutes of their set. I continued to bar hop and down beers until the sun came up. An hour of sleep was all that was had before it was off to the airport, only to be turned away at the check-in counter for lack of a Canadian PR Card (PSA: Make sure to have all travel documents in order: because "I'm a citizen of the vorld bro," doesn't cut it.) Managed to get to Seattle where I met Gravy and his wife Kelsey, who took care of me and got me to the clipper in the morning. After a thre hour journey through the strait, I am finally back in Victoria where Canadian Customs welcomed me with open arms. Happy to be home to have a steaming hot shower to wash away six days of grime.

Lessons learned; I can't wait to do it again next year.

- Jeff Martin punkrockbowling.com/



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THROW THE GOAT



AU: What bowling team are you on?

Throw the Goat

AU: Are you guys the most evil Satanic bowling team?

TTG: Absolutely. Straight from the pits of Hell and/or Idyllwild, California. It's also a band.

AU: Day drinking game face on?

TTG: Day drinking game face, tiger face, lemon face, all the faces.

AU: What's the craziest thing vou've ever seen at a bowling . Vegas festival?

TTG: At a "Bowling Vegas Festival"... Uh.. Midgets. Every time. If there are no midgets today, I will be disappointed.

AU: What bands are you stoked on this weekend?

TTG: Fuck dude, can't wait to see Iggy Pop tonight, Fidlar are fucking badass. Bad Religion, of course... Interrupters

AU: Most debaucherous thing you've seen in Vegas?

TTG: My attorney advises me not to talk about that.

AU: Describe this weekend for someone that's missing it.

TTG: Whatever you know about Las Vegas, add mohawks and a lot of tattoos, and leather jackets. And I quarantee you'll never see anything like the pool scene at Punk Rock Bowling, It's hotter than a porn film. Whatever you're into, it's there. You like giraffes? I'm sure a fuckin' giraffe is gonna come through hung as fuck

www.throwthegoat.net

ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND ZONERS



AZ: If they don't have coffee at the bowling allev I'm going to fucking kill myself.

AU: They have booze at the bowling alley. What bowling team are you on?

AZ: The Absolute Zoner fuckin' Absolute

AU: Absolute Underground

Zoners! Come on man get it right man. First time bowler?

AZ: First time bowler. Yep AU: What are you expecting?

AZ: To get drunk...

AU: You have your own bowling ball?

AZ: I've got three balls - oh, what? No, I don't have my own bowling

AU: What bands are you stoked on this weekend?

AZ: Iggy for sure, Bouncing Souls, Toys that Kill. The Grateful Dead at the MGM Grand and the New Kids on the Block.

AU: Get that fuckin' muffin in you so you can get some day drinkin' doin'! How do you get prepared for bowling?

AZ: We might be too good, so we might have to throw the game. I'm going to get a beer as soon as we get to the bowling alley.

AU: Stay away from those penis coladas too early in the morning.

AZ: I want a pina colada right now. a caffeinated pina colada! Are we missing our bus or something?

AU: Stay focused guys, stay focused!

DUKES OF HAGGARD



AU: What do you guys have planned for this year?

Chris: Getting drunk and bowling low scores.

AU: Who are you?

Chris: My name is Chris and I like bowling.

AU: Is there anyone else from Lagwagon?

Chris: No, they're in the Gimme

AU: Oh, they sold out. What else are you looking forward to this weekend?

Chris: I wanna see OFF! tonight. AU: Most debaucherous thing you've ever seen in Vegas

Chris: I saw a guy put a whiskey soaked tampon in his ass last

night, and that was me. AU: You guys are all rocking the

Daisy Duke cutoff shorts. Chris: There is less wind resistance involved and shit. I feel like that helps.



AU: How would you describe a Flock of Goo Goo to someone who doesn't know.

Greg: Well just picture five punk rockers from Orange County, dressing up in lingerie from the 80s, playing the best of the 80s, with guitars instead of keyboards.

AU: Who are you and who's in the band?

Greg: My name is Greg Antista, I dress up as Adam Ant and play the bass. And we had Mike Gabby" Gaborno as our leader Steve Soto, You know we lost Mike "Gabby" Gaborno this year after a long battle with cancer.

AU: That sucks.

Greg: But is was a great twenty year ride, it was a lot of fun.

AU: And are you guys playing a show this weekend?

Greg: No, we're not. I don't know, now that Gabby is gone, I don't know if we'll ever play again.

AU: Those were the good old days of Punk Rock Bowling. You guys would play all the time, and Manic Hispanic.

Greg: Exactly, man.

AU: Gabby embodied the spirit of Punk Rock Bowling.

Greg: Give it up for Gabby, man, I understand they're going to hang a big banner of him by the stage this weekend. So everybody go up there and lay hands on it.

GUTTER SHARKS



AU: What are the Gutter Sharks all about? What's your game plan?

Sharky: To beat the shit out of everybody

Gina: Bowl strikes, all of 'em. AU: Are you guys from

somewhere that has sharks? Sharky: From Los Angeles, I'm Sharky.

AU: How'd you get the name?

Sharky: Fucked up teeth and a bad temper.

AU: I hope you had a coffee so I'm not in the danger zone right

Sharky: Unless you're a nazi there is no danger

AU: Strategy for bowling?

Bad Steve: Drink a lot of Bloody Marys and try to keep it down the middle of the lane. That's it. Gina: High handicap.

AU: Who's all on the team here?

Sharky: We've got Sharky, Gina, Bad Steve, Josh, and Thunder Row

AU: Who are you stoked to see

Josh: We saw Ryan do an Off With Their Heads acoustic set last night. And Joe Siv put together a really good comedy show in the Gold Diggers Lounge.

AU: What's the craziest thing you've seen at Punk Rock Bowling?

Bad Steve: Just this morning I was walking down to the shuttle and there was a haggard, middle aged, punk rock chick on her knees with her nylons ripped, crying, mascara running down her face, yelling into the phone "You're not going to let me into the room?!" Mind you, this is 11am. And then, all of the sudden you see the cleaning lady coming with a vacuum down the hallway all "Good morning, good morning!" and brushes her feet with the vacuum, and the other chick on the floor started crying even more and she yells into the phone, "This lady is vacuuming me!



AU: Tell me about your bowling

Rambo: My name is Rambo. We're the Misplits from Yuma, Arizona. Third year bowling. We come to drink beer, meet friends, party and hopefully win it this year. It's about timing. You're either on or you're off. It's about camaraderie, man. We want to win but we wanna win it having a good time.

AU: It's like no one is serious enough that they won't day drink before they bowl?

Rambo: Yeah, I did that last year and we came in at 10th place because of it. So a little more serious this year, but still drinking.

AU: What bands are you stoked on this weekend?

Rambo: Oh my god, dude, the iconic living legend Iggy Pop. I just can't believe that we're going to see him in my lifetime. Pennywise, as always, it's

going to be like my sixth time seeing them. Bad Religion. Also so stoked for OFF!, Me First and the Gimme Gimmes, Interrupters.

AU: Whats the craziest Vegas story you got?

Rambo: One of the first years I came here, I was in the crowd watching Descendents and a guy behind me blew a snot rocket onto my calf. I turned around, pissed off, to punch him in the face cause there was a big green booger on my calf and I told him. "Hey dude what the fuck?" When he saw what he did, he got down on all fours and licked it off. So after that we hugged it out and had a beer.

AU: Sum up Punk Rock Bowling for people missing it.

Rambo: You guys gotta come out here, we need more friends from all over the place. The party is on Fremont. All the club shows, karaoke, bands, poker tournament, pool parties, and this bowling tournament. It's super fun. Next year they gotta get the original Misfits to play, that's all I gotta say.

SPUN SKATEBOARDS

AU: She needs your balls, man! SPUN: What's wrong with my balls?

AU: Well, apparently they are too big to ride in the back of the bus [laughter] What team are you on?

SPUN: We are Spun Skateboards. We have a bowling trophy on the shelf from like six years ago.

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bowling?



AU: Really? Relive the glory!

SPUN: We were the last team to

make the playoffs #60. We lost

first game, and we're out, but the

other team had an illegal ringer

and got disqualified, so we got

the #1 ranked team, one of our

bowlers had vomit all over his

shoes and it got on the bowling

lanes and the serious bowlers we

were up against were choked. We

ended up smoking them and they

tapped back in. We then took out

treated it like the Stanley Cup dude. Each guy got it. Drove it around in his car. Had the seat belt on it and everything. One of our players is unaccounted for today. He has the trophy. He had the most beer last night and he is also missing a tooth from the night before.

Last year he got a concussion then fell and smashed his face as well.

AU: Whats the most crazy Vegas thing?

SPUN: The pools are crazy. I'm not going in that pool. There's not enough chlorine in the world to sanitize that pool.

AU: Spun is a skateboard company, right?

SPUN: It was. Then it transitioned into Imperial skateboards for a few years and has since been dissolved but has great memories with a bunch of great kids, a handful of pros, good times in Orange County. Josh Rodriguez was an Imperial rider. He was the number one in the world in bowl skating last year.

AU: Final words..

SPUN: It's a great music festival but it's a greater bowling tournament. It's a marathon, not



DAVID BOWLING

AU: What bowling team is this? DB1: David Bowling.

AU: Day drinking?

DB1: Yeah, why not. It's Vegas, it's Saturday, and there's bowling involved.

DB2: Last year we brought my Dad to Vegas and he beat us while we were practising - so we put him on our team.

AU: You're the ringer?

Dad: Beginner's luck.

Dad: No, I don't bowl. DB1: What?! You lied to me!

AU: What's the most debaucherous thing you've seen this weekend?

DB1: People getting frisky in the pool after hours.

DB2: I would say the guy who was peeing his pants for beers. Who later became our roommate.

AU: Bands you're stoked on?

DB1: Iggy Pop this year. Come on, who can say no to Iggy Pop? Saw

Television last night, that was very cool. Shredding guitar players.

year?

going to get an NHL team in the Stanley Cup finals one of these days... too soon?

team.

DB1: Yeah, the Golden Knights. I don't know, I think they will probably need a raft though. Everything is going to melt.

206 RECORDS



AU: What's the name of your

Chris: 206 Records

AU: What are you guys all about?

Chris: Gettin' drunk and having

AU: Final words for Canadians who didn't make it to Vegas this

DB1: Let's see, don't worry - you're

AU: Vegas is getting an NHL



bowling team?

Erik: I second that.

113 aldully ars

AU: Highlights of the weekend

so far?

Nate: Not being included in a caricature with these guys, goddarn.

Chris: Having fun getting drunk. Erik: Being in the three person caricature was the best time I've ever had.

AU: What bands are you into for the weekend?

Chris: Bad Religion, Gimme

Nate: Iggy Pop, Smash Mouth, Pennywise

Erik: Vince Neil is playing free Fremont Street show tonight.

AU: Bowling advice?

Chris: Pedal to the metal.

Nate: Two in the pink, one in the stink. Get drunk have fun!

Erik: Don't make the finals because you'll miss some really good bands.

AU: Donald Trump?

Chris: Douchebag.

Nate: Fuckin' worst. Erik: You're fired.

Chris: Fuck that guy, I have to apologize as an American for inflicting him on everybody. I didn't vote for the fucking guy. Erik: I actually did vote for him. I hit the wrong box! Sorry guys!

AU: Craziest, grossest Vegas story you would never tell your mother?

Chris: Seeing this vagrant guy this morning, he was taking this massive steaming watery dump on Fremont Street as Debarge's "Rhythm of the Night" was blaring overhead. It was magical.

Nate: My mom actually subscribes to Absolute Underground, so she might be like, "Dammit Nate! I told you."

AU: I'll see you next year with the magazine you'll be in. That's how it works. We're one year behind in Canada.

JERRY AND RICH



AU: Jerry, how long have you worked at the bowling alley?

Jerry: Here at the Gold Coast over 15 years

AU: Is this the wildest party of the year?

J: I would say yeah. More of the rest of them are pretty serious about tournaments and such.

AU: So is this the most people day-drinking?

J: I don't drink, but they sure do. For people that have been drinking, they are very nice, good people. They don't get out of hand and wanna start a fight or anything like that.

AU: I once got in trouble for letting a blind guy bowl for me. They just play punk rock, right?

J: Yeah well, it sounds almost like the ones we have most of the time.

AU: Rock and bowl. Rich: We don't have cosmic

anymore so yeah, this is good music.

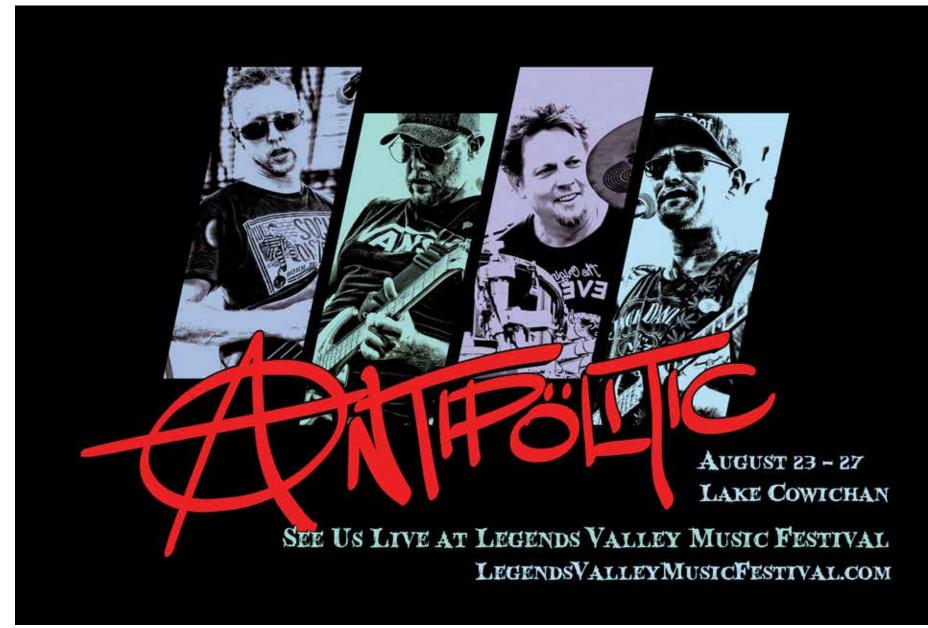
AU: Cosmic bowling? Lasers and shit?

R: Yeah, we don't have it anymore. You've just got to turn the sound up whatever it is, right?

AU: Crank it up.









Dying Fetus

Interview by AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Trey Williams: I am the drummer for Dying Fetus, and my name is Trey Williams.

AU: Tell us about your new album, Wrong One to Fuck With! It's been five years since your last

release, what can we expect to hear this time around?

TW: We do one thing, and that's playing death metal. This album is one of our attempts at creating the catchiest, grooviest death metal album possible.

AU: Does the new record explore any particular themes or topics?

TW: We used the same inspiration as our previous albums. That inspiration is the messed up world around us.

AU: You guys are known for having lyrics that are a little more political and reality-based than the death metal status quo... is this an intentional deviation?

TW: Yes. Most death

metal band don't have much to say, it's just gore. Gore is cool, but we don't base our whole image

AU: What has the band been up to for the last five vears?

TW: We toured a lot, the demand to see us after our last release was high... We know each other pretty well now, and we understand what is needed for the band.

AU: How has Dying Fetus' sound evolved since your last release? How about over the course of your 25-year career?

TW: As we get better as musicians, we are able to try different things. Just time behind the instrument is what caused the growth.

AU: Speaking of your career, what does it take to keep a band like Dying Fetus alive and touring for so long? Do you have any secrets to success or advice that you'd like to share with us?

TW: Desire. We love this, plain and simple.

AU: What does this summer have in stock for the band? Seeing as this is our summer festival issue, are there any fests

you're playing that you're particularly looking forward to?

TW: We are playing the Summer Slaughter tour in the USA this summer. No other festival plans are in the books

AU: What does the future hold for the band? Do you have any long-term goals that you haven't achieved yet?

TW: We just want to stay relevant, if we can do that, then who know what the future holds?

AU: Can you tell us about the hashtag #WhyNotDyingFetus? What does that whole episode say to you about the power of social media? Do you view it as a tool or the death of the music industry as we know it?

TW: What a great tool. We were so excited to have that happen... We found out after the fact. Our fans are the best. It would not have happened without them.

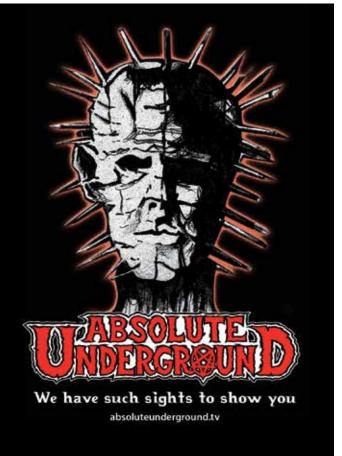
AU: What should we know about Dying Fetus and/or the new album that we don't already?

TW: It's going to crush your skull!

AU: Any final words for Canadian fans?

TW: We look forward to touring Canada again. Canada is always great to us... Thanks for the support!

facebook.com/DvinaFetus dyingfetus.bandcamp.com/ PHOTO CREDIT: Rosemary Kinkade





Chris Labrenz

Interview by AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you best known for?

Chris Labrenz: My name is Chris Labrenz. I'm probably best known for my pop-culture related artwork and eating the most hot wings in one night!

AU: How long have you been an artist? What got you started?

CL: I got started drawing at a very early age! Many artists say they started when they were old enough to hold a pencil! I'm pretty sure I started drawing in my moms womb as a fetus! Been drawing since I can remember!

AU: How would you describe the art you

create?

CL: I guess I would explain most of my art as dark... yet full of colour! I love blasting bright colours against dark solid black tones! I like to think most of my fan artwork throws peoples' minds into a place and time they grew up in! I love to dabble and express my love for the many films we all grew up with!

AU: What are some of the major influences on your artistic style?

CL: My first major artist influence is artist Drew Struzen, who created most of the epic movie poster art most of us grew up on! He is my number one inspiration and someone who has truly inspired my work since I was young! I have many talented artists I love and follow... but his work will always fuel my inspiration and artistic firel

AU: What mediums do you work in? Is there something you've always wanted to try?

CL: I have dabbled in many art forms! Wax crayon, pencil crayon, felt markers and acrylic paint... but in the last ten years or so it's either been pencil, digital colour or tattoo ink! However, I am finally dabbling into sculpting! It's one form of art I have always wanted to play with!

AU: What was the most outrageous piece of art you've ever created?

CL: Two pieces come to mind! I once drew a picture of Freddy Krueger holding Winnie the Pooh's severed head, titled, "A Nightmare in Pooh Corner," which caused a bunch of controversy in high school... which I got a thrill out of! And I also tattooed Pappa Smurf penetrating Smurfette on my dad's hip, that still blows my mind! Haha!

AU: What themes or topics does your work explore? Does it tend towards the side of good



or evil?

CL: I have come to notice most of my fan art involves movie/pop culture villains! What can I say... in the fictional world I have always rooted for the "bad guy," yet I can't stand bullies or villains in the real world!

AU: Are you stoked to be exhibiting at the Calgary Horror Con?

CL: I am beyond stoked for the next Calgary Horror Con! I do many conventions each year, but the Calgary Horror Con is by far my favourite! That's a fact! I have come to notice most "horror

fans" are the most polite, well-mannered and humble, happy humans I have ever met! Perhaps it's because we horror fans have a fictional outlet for any inner angst we may have! Who's to say for sure? The horror community is full of most of my favourite humans!

AU: Favourite horror films?

CL: Picking a favourite horror film is kind of like a parent with a thousand children trying to pick their favourite! Too many to mention... but here are a few off the top of my head! Evil Dead 2, Texas Chainsaw Massacre, The Fly, The Thing, The Shining, Exorcist, Friday the 13th Part 4, etc... I love sooo many! I can say without a doubt that

my favourite movie monsters/creatures are the Gremlins!

AU: You also do tattoos? What shop do you work out of? What styles do you specialize in?



CL: I tattoo and have been tattooing out of Crimson Empire tattoo in Edmonton for almost ten years now.

AU: What are your aspirations as an artist? Any personal philosophies? Long term goals?

CL: I believe any artist of any kind should do what they want to do! Don't let anyone guide you in the direction they think you should follow in! Follow your own gut and passion! My lifelong goal was simply to make my name a "household " one. I'd love to put my stamp on the world and inspire others before I leave this world!

AU: Upcoming projects/art shows?

CL: I have a couple projects for film posters I have

to keep hush-hush for now! But I grow excited about working on them.

AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?

CL: Well, a simple fun fact is that most fans or followers know my love for horror movies and special make up FX in terms of gore... yet I can't stand the sight of blood or gore in real life!

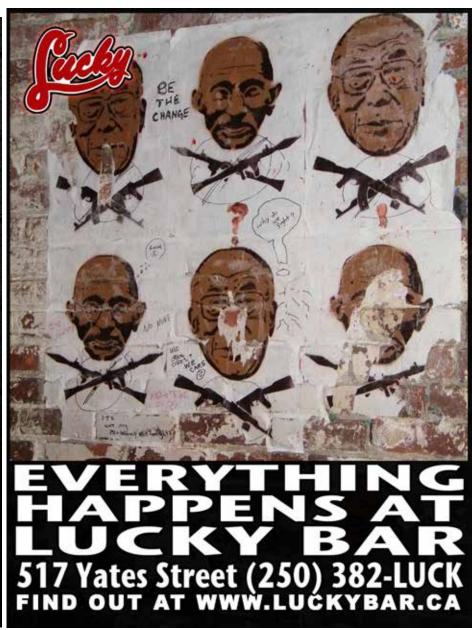
AU: Any final words for our readers?

CL: Simply do what makes you happy and keep at it! If you have passion, the work will eventually pay off one day! And keep it as weird as possible! The extreme always seems to make an impression!

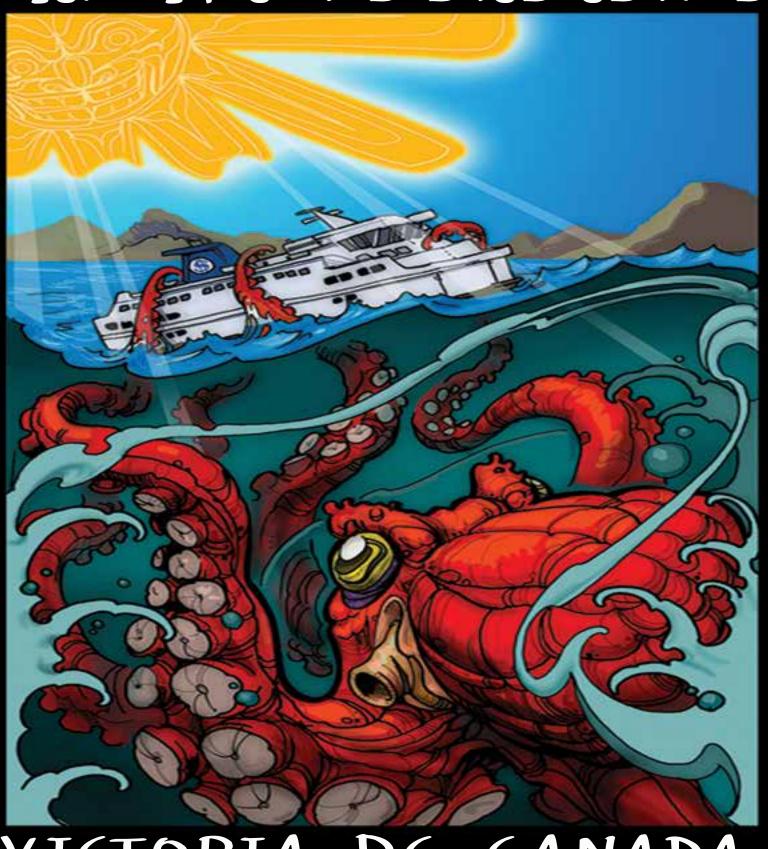
AU: Where can we see examples of your art? Website?

CL: You can check out my pop culture work and order prints a www.fanservice.bigcartel.com





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Van Isle Con Celebrates **Comics and Canada 150** By Ed Sum

June 11, 2017 - 10am-8pm Mary Winspear Center 2243 Beacon Avenue Sidney, British Columbia

Sidney, British Columbia may well get a new nickname. Instead of a book town, it will be all things comic book-related, and that's not including the written word. It will shape the landscape around this community, which started in May and it will lead to Van Isle Con. Josh Kully is part of the team who is helping to

shape the convention. As a freelance illustrator making inroads into the comic book industry with his recently published work, The Stork, he has come to know the local talents also living on Vancouver Island. In fact, they may appear in this show; Dan Schoening (Ghostbusters) and Ken Steacy (Tempus Fugitive) are well-known. His involvement in the local community and knowledge of the medium will be pivotal to making this show great.

"I honestly don't remember a time I wasn't into comics or art. It's just something I have always been drawn to, and it is a huge part of my life,"

Absolute Underground: Aside from filling a niche that no other genre-specific convention can always cover for Southern Vancouver Island (and the hoo-ha that happened with IFCon), were there other reasons that made you decide to create this show, and have it in Sidney, BC?

Josh Kully: The main reason I got on board was because there was a very obvious and great opportunity here. I was hesitant at first, knowing how much work goes into these and how easy it is to fail. I really didn't want to take on something I couldn't handle. But after hearing what kind of support we had, who all was involved and how much everyone was

 $overwhelmingly\ enthus iastic\ about$ the convention, it was pretty easy to say yes.

The reason for having it in Sidney was that this is where the opportunity was presented. The community is planning a series of events for Canada 150 and this is one of them. The Sidney Museum, who is putting on a superhero comic exhibit, were the ones who approached us with the idea. Their exhibit is called, "Up, Up and Away! Comic Book Superheroes and Our

I was asked by the museum to help with their exhibit and they asked if I would be interested in coordinating a convention to be a part of a



AU: Who else is involved in the planning of this event?

JK: The Town of Sidney is supporting the event as a Canada 150 initiative. In addition, the other key organizations are the Sidney Business Improvement Area Society (Sidney BIA) and the Mary Winspear Centre. Really, the whole community is just an amazing place to host an event; everyone is so supportive and helpful - they all want to see it be successful.

AU: What can you say to people who are hesitant either because of the past or about heading up to this township?

JK: I would say not to worry. I understand completely where people are coming from because I am one of them. I have been the fan and the vendor so I know how it feels. This event is being organized by people who are passionate

fans and con-goers like myself. We are supported by non-profit organizations who are not doing this for money or praise, we just want to make a fun event that is so lacking and much-needed in our community.

AU: What can people expect to do or see at this show?

JK: We are going to have the main hall filled with artists, cosplayers, comics, games, and other fun stuff. Throughout the day, we are going to have panels where you can listen and ask questions. Our keynote speaker is Chris Williams, who has worked for

on such films as Big Hero 6, Moana, Mulan, Bolt,



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There will be a cosplay contest and maybe even some product demonstrations. Our goal is to make this a full day of events and activities [around town]. We will have a resting area, games area, food trucks, movies will be playing in the background on projector screens, things for kids to do, comics to buy and read, get your photo taken with some cosplayers and even a T.A.R.D.I.S.

AU: What made you decide to make this event by donation?

JK: Because it is the first year, we want it to be accessible to everyone and to encourage people to come. I am also a bit

of a romantic in this sense that I believe if we do all that we can to make a great event and to get the people there that it will be more beneficial to everyone to have it by donation.

AU: In terms of local artists confirmed to appear, who can you announce?

JK: We have some really talented locals involved and many more in the works, one of which is Nevin Anold, who is releasing a book called Monsterella under his own label, Hang Man Comics. Some of the artists who worked on the book will be there, like a fantastic digital painter named Sun Kahmunaki. We have a phenomenal cosplayer who goes by the name Teryl Dactyl, a group of fantasy artists, The Dark Knight of Victoria, and many more.

AU: What are your hopes for the future of this

JK: My main goal is for this one to be well done and successful. We would love to have it be two days, filled with even more guests, exhibitors, panels, and events [but not vet.] I really want to see this convention be strong enough to happen each year and get better over time.

www.vanislecomiccon.com

Disney studios for over 20 years. He has worked Frozen, and many more.

please recycle this magazine



Interview by Adam VanThiel

Unleash The Archers have been causing a ruckus from Canada's West Coast to the far reaches of Europe over the last year, and after what seems like a very brief period at home, they are back at it with their new album Apex only a few short days away. The band's very own voice of doom, Brittney Slayes, took some time away from packing up the many, many pre-orders she has received for the album to have a chat with Absolute Underground.

Absolute Underground: For those people living under a rock, can you give me a quick history lesson on Unleash The Archers?

Brittney Slayes: Sure! Our drummer Scott and I started the band in late 2007, with an ex-member of a band Scott played in throughout university. After a while we moved to Vancouver, which cost us some members because of distance. We gained Andrew and Grant, who were playing in a band in Victoria. After that, we just kept plugging away, putting out albums, got signed by Napalm Records in 2015, and the rest is kind of history.

AU: What was it that made you want start a

BS: Well I just really wanted to front a metal band, I had been going to a lot of Scott's shows for years, and was finally done university. I wasn't really doing anything at that time, so I just sort of said one day,

"Hey why don't we give this a try." Originally, the plan was for some kind of melodic death combo, because our then guitar player Brayden was also a screamer, and actually our earliest iteration of the band had a very equal mix of clean vocals and screams. But the short answer is, I just wanted to

AU: It seems to me the screaming has died down over time, was that an artistic choice?

BS: Well after Brayden left the band. Grant sort of took over, but he prefers to do background vocals and run around like a wild man onstage so, being tethered to a mic is kind of counter intuitive. Also with Brayden gone, I write all the screams now, so I usually write them were I feel that they fit in, be it in the bridge of a song or in the choruses. There have been a few scream-heavy songs still, but there are also times where I think that the song doesn't need any, so really it's all about feel.

AU: Touching quickly on signing with Napalm Records, how has that been for the band?

BS: It's been really great. The exposure and the marketing help have obviously been a major thing for us, and is really helping us get our name out there. Logistically not much has changed, but they have definitely helped us get to places we couldn't have without them, so naturally we are pretty excited to be on their

AU: Moving on to your recent tour of Europe, did you notice anything particularly different about audiences across the pond?

BS: Well a metal fan is a metal fan, I mean there are those who stand at the back, some who are moshing the whole time and some that are

smashed up on the guard rails at the front singing along to every song right, so just like at home, it's a little bit of everything. We had a few die hards, and a few people come up to us that hadn't ever heard of us before, and that still happens even in Vancouver, so as far as I can see they are pretty similar. Obviously though there are a lot more metal

fans in general in Europe, but they have more exposure and festivals, and things seem a bit closer together. Metal is more mainstream there, so there is more infrastructure in place to support touring bands and that kind of thing.

AU: What was your most memorable experience touring?

BS: The whole tour was pretty incredible, but touring with Tyr was fantastic. I love those guys, I'm a really big fan, so seeing them play and singing along with to their tunes every night was really great, and we had quite a few evenings where we all let perhaps a little too loose, and a lot of eight a.m. nights/mornings with those guys, so that was a really great time.

AU: Does Unleash The Archers have a drink of choice?

BS: Beer, free beer.

AU: What did you guys listen to while you were on the road?

BS: We listen to pretty much everything. We discovered a lot of new bands, like Lieben, who I think were from Denmark, Also lots of Danish pop music. We had a rule on the bus that was no metal, but of course metal got played, but we listened to a bit of everything. One night there was a lot of Chicago and ELO, so you know just a huge mix of everything that was on peoples'

AU: What have you been up to since coming home?

BS: Lots and lots of band stuff, getting ready for shows, doing interviews, packaging pre-orders. We are going to do a series of CD release shows around BC and hopefully Alberta, but whenever I get a free minute we usually put on Westworld. I was really into the show Vikings too, but suddenly just stopped watching, I have to get on it again though because I have to finish the last season.

AU: So who writes Unleash The Archers' music?

BS: We all have our parts, like sometimes I'll come

up with something and show the guys and say can you write something for this, or they will come up with a riff and say hey what do think of this, and we write something around that. Sometimes Scott will even say he wants to do a specific kick pattern in a song, and can we write a song that can incorporate it. So like I said we all have our parts and everyone has a say in the arrangements too.

AU: Where was the album recorded?

BS: In Denmark at Hansen Studios, with Jacob Hansen. He has done a lot of my favourite albums, like albums I can listen to without skipping tracks, so I really wanted that for this album, so I thought to see if he was available, and he was!

AU: What can fans expect from Apex?

BS: It's the same good ol' Unleash The Archers stuff, but we also tried some new things. A few acoustic intros and the like, but nothing to far away from us.

AU: Is there an overall concept to this album?

BS: Yes. There is a story about the main character we call the immortal, who at birth was cursed to serve, and he sleeps for years at a time. Eventually someone figures out how to awaken him, and he ends up having to serve them. The antagonist of the story is the matriarch, an evil sorceress who pays him to hunt down her sons and return them to be sacrificed in her quest for immortality. So the album follows him on this quest.

AU: How does the video for "Cleanse The Blood Lines" play into the story on Apex?

BS: It's basically the first time our characters meet. But the video doesn't go exactly with the words, it sort of skips ahead a bit to where the immortal has already brought one of the sons to the matriarch, and that was just how our director decided it should play out and the resources we had at the time, so it's not bang on, but it's still amazing and it represents the album.

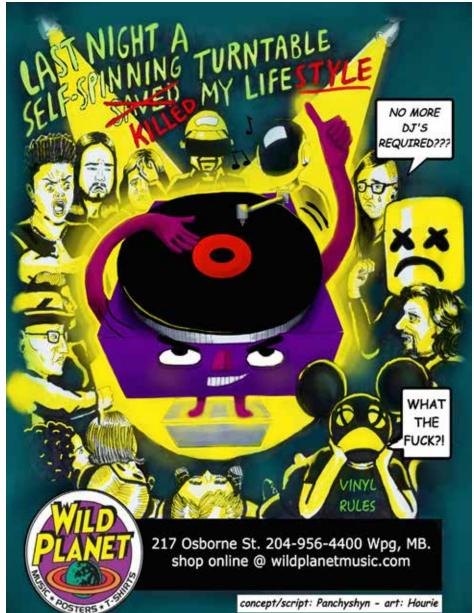
AU: So what's next for Unleash The Archers?

BS: We are hoping another tour of Europe and North America, we are trying to organize and sort out the details for that, and then hopefully South America and Japan early in 2018. If all goes as planned, we will be on the road for most of the fall and winter.

AU: Do you have any advice for people who want to start a band?

BS: Don't skimp, don't cut corners and never rush. If you're going to do it, then do it. Recording an album is hard work, so do it right. Save up the money go to a real studio and make it the best you can, don't half-ass it! And if you're going to be playing shows, have merch, and be professional and polite. Don't act like a stuck-up rock star because who you are in those situations always reflects on who you are as a band. If you want to be taken seriously, then take it seriously. Your band is a business and it should always be treated

www.unleashthearchers.com/ **PHOTO CREDIT: Shimon Karmel**









ACMPR Personnel Production Licenses Trichome Consulting Services

Growing your own medical marijuana under ACMPR Personal production license may be your best option. There are many reasons why people wish to grow their own medical marijuana and each reason is important to the individual consuming medical marijuana.

People want to feel confident that the product they consume is not contaminated and would prefer it was grown organically with out the use of pesticides. With the news reporting recalls of product due to pesticides it is understandable the concerns of consuming medicine that has the potential to contain levels of contaminates that are not allowable by Health Canada.

There is also the need for the correct plant strain to be used for an individual illness and with the latest information and knowledge of which type of marijuana strain that has shown to be effective in treating a specific illness, people run into the issue of availability to purchase a specific strain and/or able to purchase seeds of such strains.

There is a recommendation in Parliament to allow people to grow up to four plants, this is great for recreational use, but most people with illness are in need of a greater plant count for their medicinal needs.

One of the biggest issues for people that use medical marijuana products is they can't afford to purchase the products the licence producers are charging. By growing their own at a

fraction of the cost, they are able to produce that medical marijuana they need without breaking the bank.

The first step to request a personal production licence from Health Canada is to see a doctor that is knowledgeable in the medical marijuana field and understands the different illness that may benefit from medical marijuana. Once you receive the prescription from the doctor to consume medical marijuana, you can complete the Health Canada application requesting a licence under the ACMPR

One of the issues people are experiencing is their personal doctor is not willing to write this letter. "Trichome Consulting Patient Services" can help those patients that are having an issue finding a doctor that understands medical marijuana, plus those patients who would also require assistance to complete their Health Canada form, which many people find intimidating to fill out."

program.

Trichome Consulting's "Patient Service" offers confidential services for those that need assistance in finding a doctor, and would like help from a specialist to fill out Health Canada ACMPR personal production license forms.

Trichome Consulting Services (TCSI) is at the forefront of the medical marijuana industry, working with Health Canada, License Producers, Doctors and individuals through Health Canada documentation to access or

produce medical marijuana.

TCSI offers their consulting services to schedule patients with a licensed physician that is knowledgeable and experienced in medical marijuana, receive a qualified diagnosis and prescription that follows the guidelines of Health Canada.

TCSI also offers a service for clients completing their Health Canada ACMPR personal production license application, which allows them to grow their own medical marijuana. TCSI is dedicated to helping clients,

TCSI is dedicated to helping clients, and committed to educating patients, physicians, and Canadian communities of the benefits of cannabinoids and medical marijuana.

Those that require assistance accessing a doctor and applying for a Health Canada ACMPR personal production licence should contact TCSI's team of experts to assist with scheduling a doctor's appointment

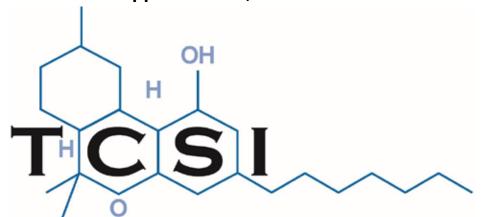
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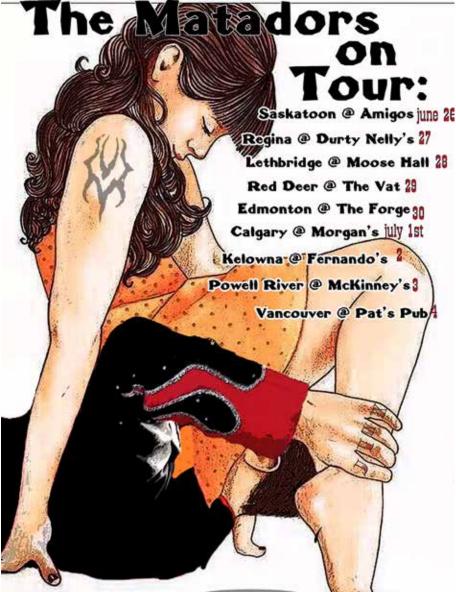
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Absolute Horror

Weird Autopsies & Zombie Viruses...

By Vince D'Amato

April saw the release of the new horror film The Autopsy of Jane Doe from Canadian distributor

Raven Banner, which as a horror movie is a truly some kind of epiphany. For old-school horror enthusiasts, who might hold a bit of trepidation when it comes to new independent horror, there is a definite danger you could be left wanting if you pass on this one. Autopsy kicks off with what looks like a home invasion gone deadly wrong; as the investigators comb through the house they find the corpse of an unidentified young woman half-exhumed from a shallow dirt grave in the

unfinished basement of the house. This is within the first couple of minutes, the proceeding hour is, as the title would suggest (and have the film deliver), the actual autopsy of the movie's Jane Doe. The autopsy occurs in the unlikely afterhours of the evening for reasons explained in

immediately, and for the next fifty minutes it's a totally enthralling maze of twists and turns, as every peel of the flesh, every incision, every deep cut of Jane Doe's corpse serves to reveal

even more questions as to the origin of the mysterious corpse, until the findings delve completely into the depths of the physically impossible and this is where the film really revs up its engines, going for breakneck nightmare-horrors that twist the characters' reality and wring it out right up to the ironic climax. Running full-speed at a relatively brief 95 minutes, the film goes non-stop, which is unusual to find in horror films that want to give us a seemingly slow build – Autopsy has so many hard-hitting beats in it, it's hard to

the first few lines

of expositional

father-son team

played by reliable

dialogue, by a

keep track, and it's definitely one of the most imaginative horrorshow rides I've experienced in

character actor Brian Cox (from Wes Craven's Red

Eye) and Emile Hirsch (Oliver Stone's Savages).

The autopsy gets under way pretty much

As a distributor, Raven Banner has been responsible for getting some phenomenal indiehorror gems out to the movie-watching public for

a little more than five years now; starting small, they themselves are something of an indie icon now, having clamored through the ranks of the cutthroat media distribution business to rise as one of the leading cutting edge genre distributors to date, thanks in no small part to the types of imaginative and crowd-pleasing genre films they've picked up for distribution. In May, Raven Banner also released, to a limited theatrical



audience, Jason William Lee's The Evil in Us.

Lee is a Vancouver filmmaker, and very appropriately, his film received its Canadian theatrical premiere at Vancouver's iconic Rio theatre in East Van. Most of the local cast and crew showed up to support and cheer on Lee's vision of rabid zombies set against a horror-classic cabin-in-thewoods location. Lee's film isn't exactly a cut-and-dried zombie flick: instead. the movie is about a group of young party-people who suddenly become violently infected, one by one, by a zombie-like virus, the origin of which is intentionally kept a mystery, thanks to Lee's toying between the main and subplots of

the film. The main plot of this virus-horror movie, like others if its ilk, played out just like a zombie



truly be applauded. Following the Canadian theatrical release of *The Evil* in Us, I spoke with that film's executive producer David Aboussafy and writer/director Jason William Lee, mostly about

the genesis of the project:

David Aboussafy (executive producer): "I strongly



agree with [David] Cronenberg's idea that horror films can be artful films that help us confront aspects of life that are difficult to face (darkness,

> anger, violence, drugs and addiction, political violence and control, etc.). [Much] like [the horror film] Get Out addressing social issues, one of the storylines in The Evil in Us has a rather sinister political angle -- the diabolical right wing conspiracy. Script-wise, The Evil in Us is all Jay, aside from some neuropharmacology mumbo jumbo I added for my scientist character (that was mostly cut).

It was also fun to get family and friends involved in the project, the fist time I directly involved my family in filmmaking craziness. My wife Melanie Adams was hired to do voice over work and my oldest daughter Emily made her big screen debut in the mansion scene

It was great to find a Canada-based distributor with a penchant for genre film and good buyer contacts, Producer Dali Brar made the deal with Raven Banner to distribute the film internationally. To date. The Evil in Us has been sold by Raven Banner to 30

territories."

movie; thematically it recalls the cinematic exploits of Nightmare City, 28 Days Later, and Robert Rodriguez' Planet Terror. But instead of simply being satisfied with following in these

films' footsteps, Lee goes for a more unique angle of having us experience the effects of the zombie-like-virus through the perception of the infected individuals, and as well, intercuts the cabin-inthe-woods scenario with his b-story, where we are taken to a mysterious and unidentified laboratory where government

experiments are taking place using human beings as their subjects. This marrying of the Stephen King ideas (monstrous government conspiracies) with the contemporary zombie-virus themes are wholly effective in the style Lee applies everything to his film, and in turn the audience

gets a breakneck-paced action-horror movie. Though it's perhaps not quite as nuanced nor as polished as The Autopsy of Jane Doe, regardless, both of these films hold a mark in the echelon that Raven Banner is keeping their own indie horror releasing to when it comes to the quality of new and subversive films.

the distinction of a film distribution company that also has their hands in film production, executive-producing several out-of-the-box

and Mexico Barbaro, a horror anthology inspired by Mexican folklore and dark culture with a segment contributed by Vancouver's Luchagore Productions (the latter movie is currently available to stream through Netflix, the former can be found on Blu-ray). Raven Banner is one of the few true entertainment film companies doing business in the global media market today,

at Sand Castle Pictures Mike Gyori and Dalj Brar had found an investor who was willing to help us starving filmmakers

Jason William Lee (writer-director): "My partners

realize our dream of producing our first feature – Mike and I [had] shot several short films together; through these projects, I met David Aboussafy, who has produced several of our films... So I started a new horror script loosely based on the "bath salts" outbreak of 2010 which apparently involved

real life zombie-esque cannibalism. Writing and directing The Evil In Us proved to be one hell of a wild ride and I loved every minute.



DA: "As a clinical psychologist, as well as a horror writer and producer. I really dig a specific Cronenberg quote: 'Everybody's is a mad scientist, and life is their lab. We're all trying

to experiment to find a way to live, to solve problems, to fend off madness and chaos..."

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Absoute Comic-German more expressive in that anime style. AU: How did this new series come about?

Dan Mendoza



In the comic book world, not many creators truly get risqué with what they love to write or draw. Dan Mendoza's works have wow-factor; his stories poke at the inner psyche and his art, though exploitative in nature, has a style that works with

the tales he wants to tell. Zombie Tramp (ZT) is running strong for four years now (published by Action Lab Comics) and this year marks the beginning of a shared universe which includes the debut of Dollface, a collaborative effort he's working on with Bryan Seaton (one of the CEOs of the company). With the first story arc done, readers will find it takes many inspirations from various sources — from scary fairy traditions to Japanese Iolita fashion — and when read along with Vampblade (2016), this concept easily puts the mythos from series like CW's Supernatural or the coming Universal Pictures Dark Universe to shame. Later this year, he's planning on launching his own label, Candy Corpse Comics.

Considering Mendoza's admiration for Mike Mignola's Hellboy, there's a style to be found which Dan's own work sometimes mirrors. This artist said, "I read everything Mignola has done. The storytelling and the feel of his books are just awesome and Dollface is more influenced on that kind of stuff because it delves into witchcraft and fairy. I really like how Mignola took folklore from all over the world and utilized them in his stories."

This artist also loves the cinema of the 60s and 70s, so my big question is, what are his influences?

Dan Mendoza: Russ Meyer's movies were big for me. His best film is Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill! and I love that movie — sexy girls, fast cars, martial arts — just cool campy stuff. It has a rhythm that you'll find in a Tarantino movie.

Another [filmmaker I respect] is John Waters. He's a big time now; back then, he made movies with Divine, a transvestite, and the stuff they made together were awesome. They were really good pulpy movies. The media named him the Prince of Puke, and when you look at him now, performers can't wait to work with him. Back then, he was considered trash.

AU: In the comic book world, who did find

DM: I would always see Ron Lim (Ex-Mutants) doing signings back when I still lived in Sacramento. I got into Silver Surfer because of him. I also really liked how Jim Lee drew women, especially after finding an X-Men book which had a cover had Rogue fighting Ms Marvel, or something like that, all mutated. I bought a lot of his comics and learned from his style. I also studied other artists like Whilce Portacio, Mike Zeck and Joe Sacco.

My style was more American influenced back then, as I was just getting into anime. I kept going back and forth until it became what it is now

AU: How did you get into anime, and were there any particular artists who influenced you?

DM: I got into anime when I was in the eighth grade or so. One of my friends would go to Japan once in awhile and when he came back, he said I had to watch Akira. Shirow Masamune (Ghost in the Shell) and Yukito Kishiro (Battle Angel Alita) are awesome artists. The way Kishiro draws his action sequences are the best. Another is Satoshi Urushihara (*Plastic Little*); the way he draws women is so sexy. His "Boob Logic" is really nice because of the way he includes squish effects. Other shows include FLCL because of the way the humour rolls in it and I watched *Dragonball Z* all the time. I think I own everything there is for that

AU: When it came to both worlds influencing your work, what can you say about it?

DM: I think the early Teen Titans animated series really helped readers [here in America] get used to that look. and now with the new series, which is way over the top with expressions — which is

cool. When I talk about Dollface, I wanted it to be more expressive in that anime style.

DM: Brian came to me with this idea, "Do you want to do this book about a zombie conjurer?" and I said, "Nah, but what about a witch hunter?" He was thinking of something like [along the lines] of Weird Science, where these kids wanted to bring to life a sex doll or a mannequin, and that's the time I started to get really into [drawing] ball-iointed dolls.

I looked at the communities on Instagram. I asked what if we made [the heroine] one? I showed him pictures. I asked what if we have a life-sized one and we dress her up with gothic lolita-style clothes? He liked the idea. I said give me a week and I gave him the whole presentation — I wrote up a whole synopsis of what the story would be and I started doing rough drawings and he liked it! We go over storylines together, but I do everything to make the look and feel of it.

AU: What's a typical month (or timeline) like for you since you're handling two comic books?

DM: It's really hard. I'm working 10 to 12 hour days. I gotta do multiple covers every month, I gotta write two different books and then I gotta draw Dollface. For some other artists, it usually takes five to six weeks to draw one book, and I'm doing it in two weeks.

With Dollface right now, since I'm doing so much of it myself, I'm just making the deadlines. I haven't really been able to get ahead. We're looking to put together a team soon to help me with the books. If I can get other artists involved like in Zombie Tramp — we have four different artists working on that — then we can be further along. Issue 35 or 36 is now out, and we're working on #40.

AU: What can you say about Zombie Tramp and its current story arcs? One detail I could not help but notice is in how hints of an Ancient Egyptian world is creeping in.

DM: All the Voodoo stuff you see is based on Haitian lore. I've looked it up. We have this new villain: Kaiju Queen (KQ). She's not based on anything in particular. So I took the Voodoo and turned into something else.

[As for Egypt], I don't want to do an Age of Apocalypse story. I want to touch more on her background, and explore different time eras with her. The idea of her to make this chosen one into this super demon monster is to help her enter the Earth realm proper. KQ has been trying for



centuries but kept on failing. Well, that's until Janey Bell came along. She is the farthest along KQ has successfully created in achieving her goals. Also, I'm doing all these ancient hieroglyphics out of my head, and I keep it Egyptian in a way. All the spells they cast and other fun stuff you read, it's an alphabet I made up in elementary school. I still use it to this day, and I'm using that same alphabet in Dollface.

AU: What can you say about the latest story arcs that are out in stores now?

DM: We have a two-parter story about Xula, Zombie Tramp's trainer/mother-figure, and the story is just with her trying to get the dagger for KO and all this. Next issue is them looking for Morning. ZT knows Morning has the answers for who KQ is; she had to have encountered her. In the next volume, we will look at where KQ is coming from. Since ZT has to hibernate to rejuvenate her powers, not every issue will be focusing in on her.

AU: How long do you expect your main series to run for, and do you have any words to say in closing to our readers?

DM: I have so many stories in my head, where I can keep going forever, but ultimately Zombie Tramp does have an ending. I can write it anytime. Since *Dollface* is a shared property, it can go on as long as Action Lab wants it to.

Thanks for reading, and enjoying my artwork. I work really hard on these books and they are my life. I'm a workaholic and to see my fan base growing, and you guys loving my stuff, it's all makes it worth it.

facebook.com/Danmendozacomics/



Marnie Scarlet

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Marnie Scarlet: My Name is Marnie Scarlet and I am most infamous for my inflatable latex

AU: When did you first become involved in the fetish scene?

MS: Many, many moons ago at the render age of 18, I started work making latex clothing for Demask, which was then based in Amsterdam.

AU: Do you have a particular fetish you are obsessed with?

MS: I am obsessed with dressing up and

transforming myself, I love the act of transformation. which is why I love latex. I can create different guises and I can really be any creature I would like to be.

AU: What are some of the events where you have performed in the past?

MS: I perform very regularly at Wasteland and Torture Garden (all over Europe UK and Japan), I have also performed at Smack in New York Name a European fetish event, and I will have strutted my heels there.

AU: How would you describe your performance style and what do vou have in store for Vancouver Fetish Weekend?

MS: Mad. badass and dangerous to know! I mix fetish cabaret with elements of of drag and performance art, add to that many layers of latex and some big, out-there looks! I will be bringing two of my biggest shows to Vancouver and I literally cannot wait!

AU: Do you have any advice for novices interested in the fetish scene?

MS: Go out there with an open mind and don't be afraid to approach people and to ask questions, feel free to experiment, it is encouraged in this

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> fetish world. The most wonderful people I have ever had the good fortune of meeting are on the fetish scene.

AU: Anything else you would like to mention?

MS: My Instagram ishttps://www.instagram.com/

My Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/ Marnie-Scarlet-115777641825019/?pnref=lhc Twitter https://twitter.com/MarnieScarlet And website, www.marniescarlet.com PHOTO CREDIT: Tigz Rice www.Tigzrice.com

SOCIALIZING | DANCING | FETISH FASHION SHOWS | DUNGEON GEAR & KINK PLAY | PERFORMANCES



DAYS & NIGHTS OF WORLD-CLASS KINKY PARTYING
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Domestic Long Hair • Senior • Spayed • No other cats • Loves dogs!: Laurelle is a very sweet girl. Her delicate features, melodic 'meow' and whisper-soft fur make her very special. She is very affectionate. It's been hard to pictures of her because when the camera comes out, she puts on a show! As a senior, she qualifies for permanent foster care, meaning her vet bills are covered for the rest of her life.

Laurelle is at Katie's Place, Maple Ridge katies.place@shaw.ca

Rottweiller Cross • Approx. 12 years • Female: A senior with a lot of pep in her step and tons of love to give! Her favourite activities are hanging out with family, walks, chasing a ball at the park, and giving plenty of kisses! Good with other dogs of all sizes and loves kids. She is good with cats but has been known to annoy them with her inquisitive nature. An extremely friendly and sweet dog who lives to love!



Sadie is at Westcoast Rottweiller Rescue, Surrey wcrr.info@gmail.com



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Vancouver Fetish Weekend

Interview with DJ Pandemonium

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Isaac T: I'm Isaac T, AKA DJ Pandemonium, organizer of fetish, alternative and counter-culture events in Vancouver for almost 20 years now. Other than as a long-standing DJ in Vancouver, I'm by far most well known as the organizer of Sin City Fetish Night, which just celebrated its 15 year anniversary, and Vancouver Fetish Weekend, which is now in its fourth year.

AU: What was your first experience in the fetish world?

IT: That is a hard one to pin down! I started first as an event organizer in the underground alternative/ goth/industrial scene back in the mid-90s, and back in those days, that scene and the fetish scene were heavily overlapped, much moreso than they are now. You'd have all sorts of wild characters coming out who were more sexually expressive with far more diverse and kinky tastes than your average person, dominatrixes, submissives, leather boys and more hanging out at the goth nights, which very much were a crossroads for many members of the kinky community in the way the more common fetish events of today are. Remember, back in those days there were no cameras in clubs, no internet, lots of crazy stuff went on. Eventually this led to checking out the local fetish nights here in Vancouver, and getting more and more involved, until we eventually started our own way back in May of 2001, and it's been full steam ahead ever since with an incredible show of support from the local kink community for a decade and a half now!

AU: Tell us about the upcoming Vancouver Fetish Weekend.

IT: The Vancouver Fetish Weekend is a four-day festival of events celebrating kink in all its forms, opening our doors and inviting the international fetish community to check out our wonderful city and local scene. It originally grew out of Sin City's huge anniversary parties, but it's also grown to include many other local groups as well who contribute and help make it as amazing a festival as it is. It's also by far the biggest party of the year for our local kink scene, with huge events, international

fetish performers, designers, and people from all over the world descending on the city for one gigantic hedonistic party where everyone can transform themselves into the kinky creatures they truly are and let loose in an over the top, inspiring, exhilarating, and safe sexually expressive environment. There are DJs, dancing, all sorts of crazy fetish wear, vendors, dungeon play areas, fetish fashion shows, crazy stage shows, fire shows, after parties, and all events ha a strict fetish dress code ... in short, it's one hell of a perverted party!

AU: Who are some of the special quests attending?

IT: This year is by far our biggest lineup of international and local talent for the fetish performances of the festival – Just off the top of my nead, we have Masuimi Max from Las Vegas coming, Cervena Fox from the Pyrohex fire performance group in London, Val Vampyre from the mighty Fetish Factory in Florida, The Lost Girls, Valynne Vile, Frankie Faux, Villainy Loveless, Lola Frost, Jane Smoker, Samantha Mack, Rubbout .. not to mention our massive fetish fashion show with global trend-setters Dawnamatrix Latex from Seattle and Pandora Deluxe Latex from London!

AU: I hear there is a fetish cruise planned as well, what will that entail?

IT: The Fetish Cruise is a privately chartered cruise which is a bonus event on the Sunday night for about 200 lucky weekend pass holders who grabbed weekend passes before space on the cruise ran out. It is by far the jewel in the crowd of the whole



weekend, with a yacht tricked out with DJs, dance areas, and all sorts of kinky fetish play areas. As you can imagine, it gets pretty wild! It docks at sundown with a limo bus waiting, which shuttles everyone to the closing party at the Penthouse, where the madness continues at the closing party.

AU: Any advice for newbies to the scene?

IT: Vancouver Fetish Weekend, Sin City, and most fetish club events are very newbie-friendly! If you are an absolute first-timer, the fetish dress code can seem daunting, and it might be the single thing you stress about the most before coming to

your first event, but it will be the first thing you forget about once you get inside and find yourself in a sea of amazing, kinky, respectful, fun-loving kinky people who are all on the same page. Literally everyone who comes to the party helps make it what it is by adding their creativity into the mix. Lower your guard, shed your inhibitions a little, and you'll be surprised how amazing of a time you will have. Fetish parties have a way of ruining people on regular events, which never seem the same afterwards!

AU: Any fashion tips to help people adhere to the fetish dress code of these events.

IT: We have an amazing store here called Deadly Couture, which stocks an incredible array of different styles for every comfort level, with loads of options for both guys and girls. If you're absolutely new, that's your first stop for sure, the staff will take care of you! There are tons and tons of photos and videos on the website which you can browse to see what people are wearing and look for inspiration. but the general rule is, all outfits have to be kinky / risqué / sexy / perverted / daring / fetish in some way. Absolutely no plain day wear! If you could walk down the street in it and no one would bat an eye, probably it won't pass muster and you need to kink it up a little more. Trust us, everyone will love it and appreciate it. The more expressive people are, the more fun they tend to have!

AU: What are some of the differences between the scene in Vancouver and other places you have traveled.

IT: Well, one of the greatest things about the

Vancouver scene, is that we are a melting pot of many communities, all coming together with of a shared love of kinky self-expression. The Vancouver scene is a healthy mix of straight, GLBTQ+, crossdressers, young, old, alternative, festival, burlesque, BDSM, regulars, newbies, singles, couples, swingers... everyone you can think of is in the mix having a great time. We are a bunch who are serious about having a super fun and kinky time, but at the same time don't take it too seriously. Many scenes in other cities are not like that - they can be way more serious, or more commonly, the crowd is made up of a much smaller cross-section of communities and subcultures represented. Many other scenes also are mostly basic black when it comes their kink wear. Not so here – the Vancouver scene is not shy about being zany and colourful! Our local fetish scene is almost like Vancouver's best kept secret – we have this world-renowned fetish scene here that at this point is internationally recognized, yet so many people here who theoretically report on local culture locally still have no idea! Luckily Absolute Underground knows

AU: What are some other events/nights you organize?

IT: Every three months I co-produce an event called SPANK, which is the absolutely bonkers electrosexual lovechild of myself from Sin City and Matt Troy from the Vancouver Arts & Culture Center. That party is a BEAST and exploded almost immediately into a sold-out event every time. The party is all-electronic, drag and gender-bending, dancing mania and sexpositive play galore. My other major event these days is MADHAUS, a monthly two-room goth/industrial/ alternative/psytrance party, which is the successor to the much-missed Sanctuary, which ran for 16 years but retired as a weekly event in 2013. Lastly, every now, and then we throw and event called GALAXION, which is a retro/gamer night, complete with a mini-arcade built into whatever bar we invade, retro gaming systems on all the TVs, new wave music all night, the whole nine yards. It's crazy fun.

AU: Final words for fetish fans reading this.

IT: Give in to sin! If there's one event you make it to this year, you owe it to yourself to come to Vancouver Fetish Weekend and jump in off the deep end! Come to the dark side... you're gonna like it. We won't bite, unless you ask us to!

www.vancouverfetishweekend.com www.sincityfetishnight.com



SBC

Interview by PD of Skull Skates

Absolute Underground: What's SBC?

Malcolm Eric Hassin: SBC is a couple things, there's the history that came from the Smilin Buddha Cabaret which was a music venue, Chinese Restaurant. Now it's an indoor skate park, music venue, restaurant, art gallery, community spot.

AU: This is in downtown Vancouver, is that correct?

MEH: Downtown Eastside.
Andrew Turner: 109 East Hastings.

AU: You're talking about the Smiling Buddha Cabaret, do you guys know when this place opened up originally?

AT: It was opened in '53 by a guy named Harvey Lowe, who was a significant historic personality in the Chinese community here, did a lot of stuff in business not just here but around the world. He and his buddies opened it and ran it as a cabaret, it was a bottle club and music venue, right 'til the late 80s.

AU: Who were some of the early performers?

MEH: I have been told that Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and Jefferson Airplane played. The punk rock scene in Vancouver is kinda what it's known for.

AT: Cheech and Chong worked in here when they weren't allowed to work anywhere else, playing in bands and doing variety shows. They used to use it as a rehearsal spot, because Tommy's family wouldn't let them practice their bits at their clubs.

AU: And then the early punk rock, tell us just quickly about the early punk rock scene in Vancouver at what was then the Smilin Buddha Cabaret?

AT: DOA's early stuff, The Skulls, the Pointed Sticks, Art Bergmann. Dayglos were the house band here in the

late 80s and early 90s. MEH: Subhumans

you guys occupied the space?

AU: And then the place was empty, it was about to fall into the ground... how did it come about that

AT: I was hanging around here, working on retail spots, trying to get cheap rent for friends and met you at an art gallery opening up the street. Guess I was interested in the spot and knew a bit about the history; it had really fallen into disrepair, I figured we would go find out who owned it and angle our way in here.

AU: I remember it being pretty bad, not looking like it would make it through another winter. So you secure the place, you meet the landlords, what about renos?

MEH: Fourteen months, fifteen months, most of those run off a generator.

AT: Had the generator chained up in the lane, basically the floor was in the basement and the roof was on the floor, no electrical or plumbing.

AU: So why skateboarding? Why is there a ramp where the Smiling Buddha used to be?

MEH: It's been my passion since I could put my feet on a board... never been super great at it, but always something I loved and that was always there. This is a much-needed indoor space in Vancouver with the rainy weather. There have always been private ramps around, but I also was part of and learned from the fellas over on the island, SxMxSxP, also know as Six Side, I learned a lot from those guys; just blood, sweat, tears, a space to build and a lot of beer. Shit can happen, you just gotta keep at it. Back then, and I guess to this day, fundraising for concrete was key, so we would rent a hall, get beer donated, ask bands that are down with the cause and throw a banger.

AU: It's not an easy thing to do, people probably don't understand how much work it is to run an indoor space. Andrew, this was in your mind much earlier?

AT: Yeah, Andy from Slam City Jam, those guys kinda invited me to the coalition when it was getting started way back when, I kinda just got to be a fly on the wall. There was that Patterson spot that was going that gave me a little look into what it might take into getting a ramp going... it was something me

and my buddies talked about for 15-20 years.

AU: It's a pretty solid ramp, lots of heavy sessions go down when the weather's crap eh? What else happens at SBC these days?

MEH: Live music, mainly every weekend, art shows... the doors are always open when it's raining. We're very community-oriented, families come in either just to watch or to partake, as well as just people coming to watch and get stoked on something positive, particularly in the neighbourhood we're in.

AU: We're in the downtown east side, which is a part of Vancouver's city core... Is there anything else you can tell us about it and certain people's reactions to being the new guys... guess that was three years ago now...

MEH: It's my favourite neighbourhood, it's gnarly, there are tons of mental health issues, tons of addiction, but it's painted with the wrong brush, the community down here is the tightest I have ever been part of, for sure.

AT: It's one of the oldest parts of the city, it's got a ton of great history, there are a lot of lifers down here.

AU: People who don't come around here too often, they see the mental health issues and the drug problems, but what you don't see if you don't spend a bit of time down here is the sense of community, and the fact that there are lot of creative people here in this particular neighbourhood. What are some of the memorable things that have happened, whether it be skatewise or music?

MEH: Nomeansno, last New Year for me, Howard Ricks from The Stinging Hornets, Bev Davies, the original photographer and documenter of many things, but has for sure the fullest collection of the punk rock scene in Vancouver. She had and art show and we pasted her photos of all the old Buddha shots, that are still up to this day.

AU: You guys have a pretty pumpin' system in here too, eh?

AT: Cecil English and The Rock Shop have done a lot to help us out. He's a DIY record producer, he was the sound guy here... I think he told me one of his first real sound gigs was in the mid 70s.

AU: He's known in Vancouver as a sound engineer

AT: I would say across Canada. There was a girl here from Belgium that showed up, she was an audio engineer couldn't believe he was here, she learned about him in school.

AU: What about the society, is there one that's attached to SBC?

MEH: We originally started the Downtown East Side Skateboard Society, with a program we were growing with at-risk youth, we were all volunteers... there was a psychiatrist, a doctor, and there were skateboard instructors.

AU: This is medical professionals recognizing skateboarding...

MEH: They were calling it "skatefullness" teaching mindfulness and skateboarding, as well as taekwondo and medication.

AT: It was an awesome program, a lot of those kids still come see us, even though we aren't able to do it anymore.

AU: Other than trying to get along, what would you say is the most challenging thing about opening a small business in Vancouver in this day and age?

AT: Figuring out how to afford it, once this place goes, or the rent gets too high, you gotta go hunt for a spot to make it work, to make this work, too. There are all sorts of challenges, from the day-to-day stuff to dealing with the man and the different governments.

AU: So why do it then?

MEH: Love... I don't know what I would be doing if we weren't doing this.

AU: Any closing comments?

MEH: Want to thank all our volunteers and friends and supporters, Skull Skates, SixSide crew the music scene in Vancouver, the skateboard scene.

facebook.com/sbcrestaurant/ http://www.sbcrestaurant.ca/

PHOTO CREDIT: Jiles Barrett







High Horse / Dead Valley Cult

Floyd Meets Brown

Blackberry Wood

27

29

30

Mauno

Matador Royal Oak Red Haven Echo Nebraska **Tropic Harbour**

Little Coyote

POTF

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If you're looking for amazing music, epic views, and an awesome vibe, look no further than the annual World Ski

Whistler and Blackcomb, this year featured countless free mini-games and giveaways from top vendors such as Monster. Yerbamate, and Joe



and Snowboarding Festival (WSSF)! This thousands of visitors of all ages looking for a unique venue with tons to offer. Nestled in the world-renowned mountains of

FEATURE SHOW

Boxer. Adding some culture to the event were numerous art and film shows such as the Comedy and Photography Showdowns, Olympus 72h Filmmaker Screening, and



ARTdrenaline 2017.

Once you've had your fill of freebies and food, you can make your way down to the Skier's Plaza to take advantage of Fido's Free **Outdoor Concert** Series. The 2017 lineup included talents such as Walk off the Earth, Swollen Members. and Busta Rhymes, leading the event into its electrifying nightlife. The WSSF takes

Props to Olympus for sponsoring the event, and to Jamie Kerrigan and Kristy Aleksich for putting it all together. Without vou we'd never have been able to create

WSSF.COM



pride in providing a diverse, energetic, and family-friendly atmosphere while keeping the film and art industry alive.

such an amazing celebration of talent. See you next year! -Tonow Tokunaga

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June 17th







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GRUNGE, 90S ROCK, AND MORE

Absolute **Underground's** Summer Festival Guide

Sled Island - June 21 - 25 Calgary, AB

Sled Island is a multi-day, multi-venue festival that features over 250 bands. artists, comdians and more performing at 35+ venues throughout Calgary.

Highlights: Converge, Wolves In The Throne Room, Daughters

http://www.sledisland.com/

Have a Good Laugh - June 29- July 1 Vancouver, BC

Currently in its second year, Have a Good Laugh is a punk festival showcasing both local and foreign talent; it takes place across several Vancouver venues and house shows. Eight gigs, three afterparties, lasers, smoke, and more!

Hightlights: Extreme Noise Terror, Antisocial, Descecration, Massgrave, Bishops Green

www.thoughtdecay.com

Metalocalypstick -July 1-2

Lone Butte, BC

Metalocalypstick is a two-day metal fest featuring metal or hardcore/punk bands with one or more FEMALE members. All Canadian, all power: with special out-ofcountry guests! This event takes place at the Interlakes Community Centre, and the proceeds are donated to various charities.

Hightlights:

Sovereign Council, Cabrakaän, Scythia, Anarcheon, Tessitura, Massive Scar Era, Kymatica, HEDKS

www. metalocalypstickfest. rocks

Armstrong Metalfest - July 14-15

Armstrong, BC

Currently in its ninth year, Armstrong Metalfast takes place at the Hassen Arena with camping on the surrounding festival grounds.

Famous for stacked lineups and fun extracurriculars, like Thrash Wrestling, 100-Man Shotgun, and Beer Helmet

Highlights: Revocation, Aggression, Atrous Leviathan, Dead Ouiet, Expain, Gatekeeper, Ninjaspy, XUL, Zuckuss www.ArmstrongMetalFest.ca

SBC SUMMER 2017 SCHEDULE

FRI JUNE 9 - AGING YOUTH GANG. SCOTT MARTIN BAND. + GUESTS

SAT JUNE 10 - REBEL PRIEST, THE
REKKENING, RUMSFELD, DIRTY DEBBIE
THE DAISY STRANGLERS
SAT JUNE 17 - THE HALLOWED
CATHARSIS (ALBUM RELEASE),
OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE, THE MOUTNAIN FOR SONES. + GUESTS
MAN, UNROOT
SAT JULY 22 - DISCO FUNERAL, JERIC

FRI JUNE 23 - UGLY MEN, BORT, KOSM, DANDY JENKEM, SWITCH TO BLACK SAT JUNE 24 - 1 BRAINEATER, CLONE.

STAB EM IN THE ABDOMEN FRI JUNE 30 - NEEDLES/PINS

(LP RELEASE), WOOLWORM, SIGHTLINES, ALIMONY

FRI JULY 7 - CELL, TALE OF THE TOMB, + GUESTS

FRI JULY 14 - SHIT TALKERS, JASON CAMP AND THE POSERS, THE JACKSON DUB BAND.

SZONES, + GUESTS SAT JULY 22 - DISCO FUNERAL, JERICHO,

FRI AUGUST 18 - RIOT BREWING PRESENTS BOGUE BRIGADE, CAR 87, SURROUNDED BY IDIOTS, UPPER RANKS, SAT AUGUST 19 - SBDC, VIEWMASTER,

+ GUESTS

ALL SHOWS \$10 DOORS 8:00 MUSIC 9:00 19+ NO BYOB

109 E HASTINGS

Loud As Hell - August 4-6 Drumheller, AB

Loud As Hell is a three-day, all ages festival in Drumheller, Alberta, Along with bands, the festival features vendors, clinics, freakshows and much more, along with on-site camping.

Highlights: Battlecross, Bison, Aggression, Black Wizard, Galactic Pegasus, Nylithia, Neck of the Woods, Tales of the Tomb, WMD www.loudashell.com/

Cowichan Lake, Vancouver Island, BC

Legends Valley combines a traditional music festival with the Bio Cup Cannabis Expo in a five-day camping experience at a unique location, Laketown Ranch.

Legends Valley - August 23-27

Highlights: Body Count, House of Pain,

Wings Of Metal - September 7 - 10 Montreal, QC

Wings of Metal is a three-day underground metal festival that takes place in Montréal, Québec. Organized in a DIY way, the goal is to bring quality established and emerging bands together in the style of European metal festivals. The styles of the bands playing will vary from doom to heavy, NWOBHM, thrash, black and death

Highlights: Sacrifice, Spell, Voivod,

facebook.com/WingsOfMetalFestival

Obituaries

Brent Alois Johnson

Born Oct. 28, 1972 - Passed away unexpectedly in Vancouver on April 24, 2017.



Predeceased by his father Pat Johnson, and missed dearly by his Mum, Charlotte Legien (Johnson nee Jacobs). sister Teresa Johnson and nephew (Sterling) Zane Johnson, in addition to his aunts. uncles, and cousins. Brent will be greatly missed by

many friends he considered family (Billy, Jason, Matt, and Danny, to name a few) including many musicians in both Vancouver and Regina.

Brent was a talented and creative musician who started playing instruments at a young age. He $\,$ played drums, bass, and guitar, rockin' the tunes in the garage! Music was his love and his life. He frequented shows regularly, spent all he had on music, and supported many local bands. In Regina he also was involved in local events to raise money for charity.

A number of bands he played in were: Randy Rampage, The Curse, Power Clown, Wasted Strays, Strugglers, Real Mackenzies, and Scum Element. Brent was an amazingly kind, witty, generous, and

your brother and you knew you could count on infectious laughter -- his "deadly jokes" would put a smile on everyone's face. Brent loved anything and anyone odd, eclectic, or eccentric. Unknown to many, Brent was an avid reader of religion/ occult, health, science, and classic literature, was trained as a vibrational sound therapist, and loved a wide range of music... jazz, classical, metal, rock, punk rock, you name it.

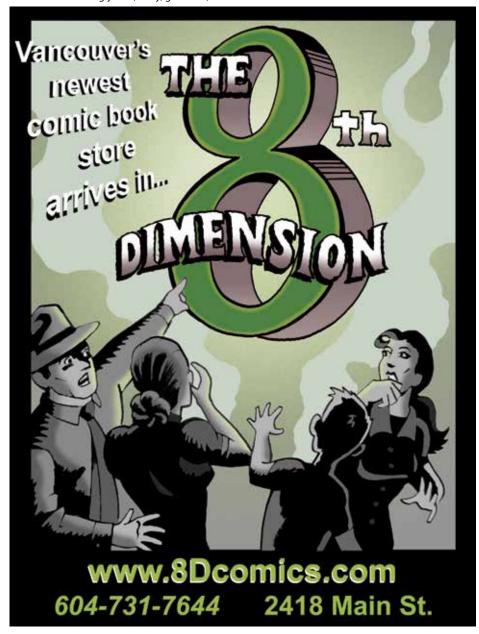
A kick-ass wake was held in Vancouver, Saturday April 29, with another to be planned for Regina at a later date when he is home.

There will be a memorial gig June 3 at the Rickshaw in his honour. Have a shot of JD for Brent!

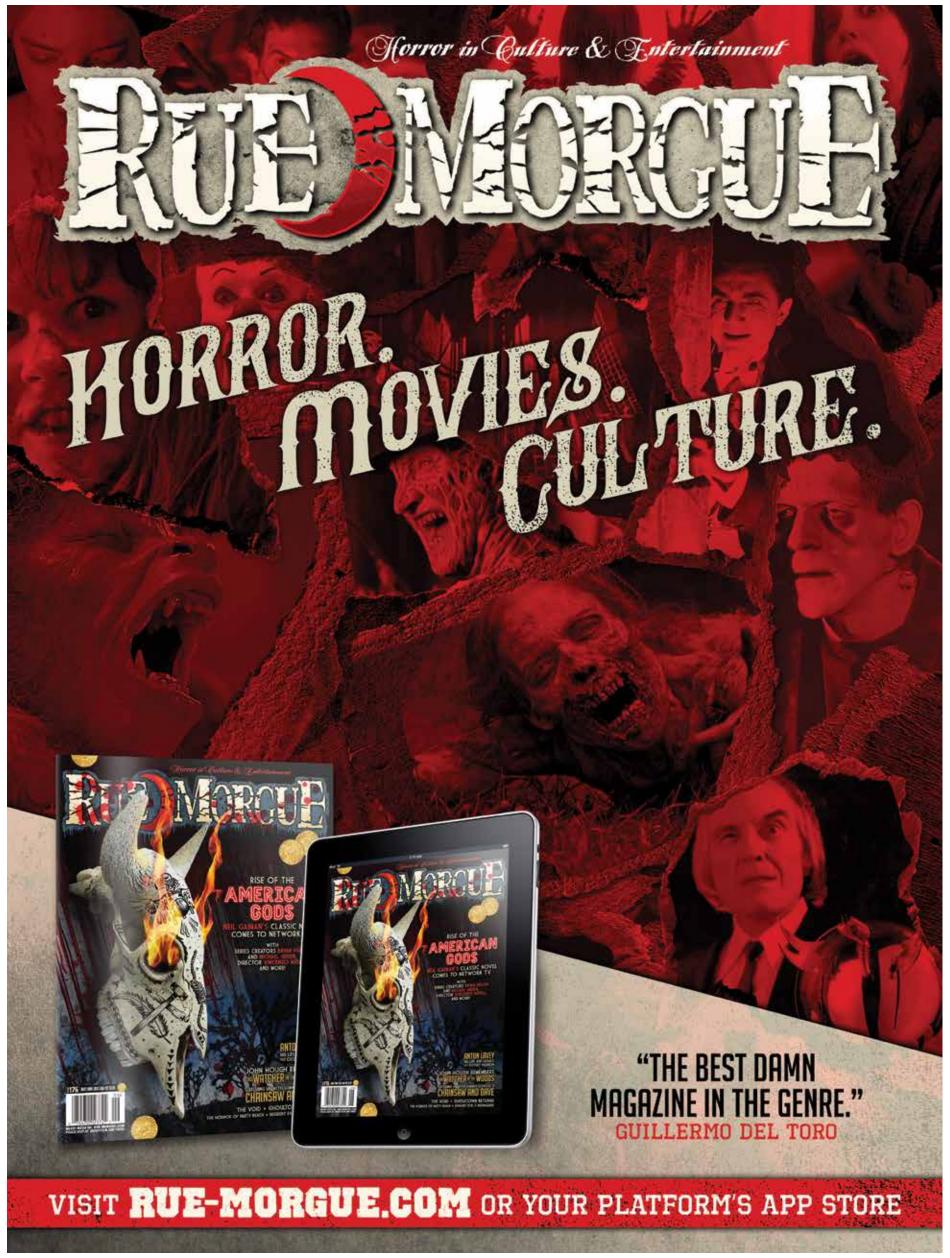
May you be in heaven half an hour before the devil knows yer dead! (Irish blessing) Love you, Brent.















- SEPTEMBER 23 - EDMONTON EXPO CENTRE, HALL D - TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER STARTING JUNE 17TH -

Gene will also be appearing at the Edmonton Comic & Entertainment Expo, September 22-24

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